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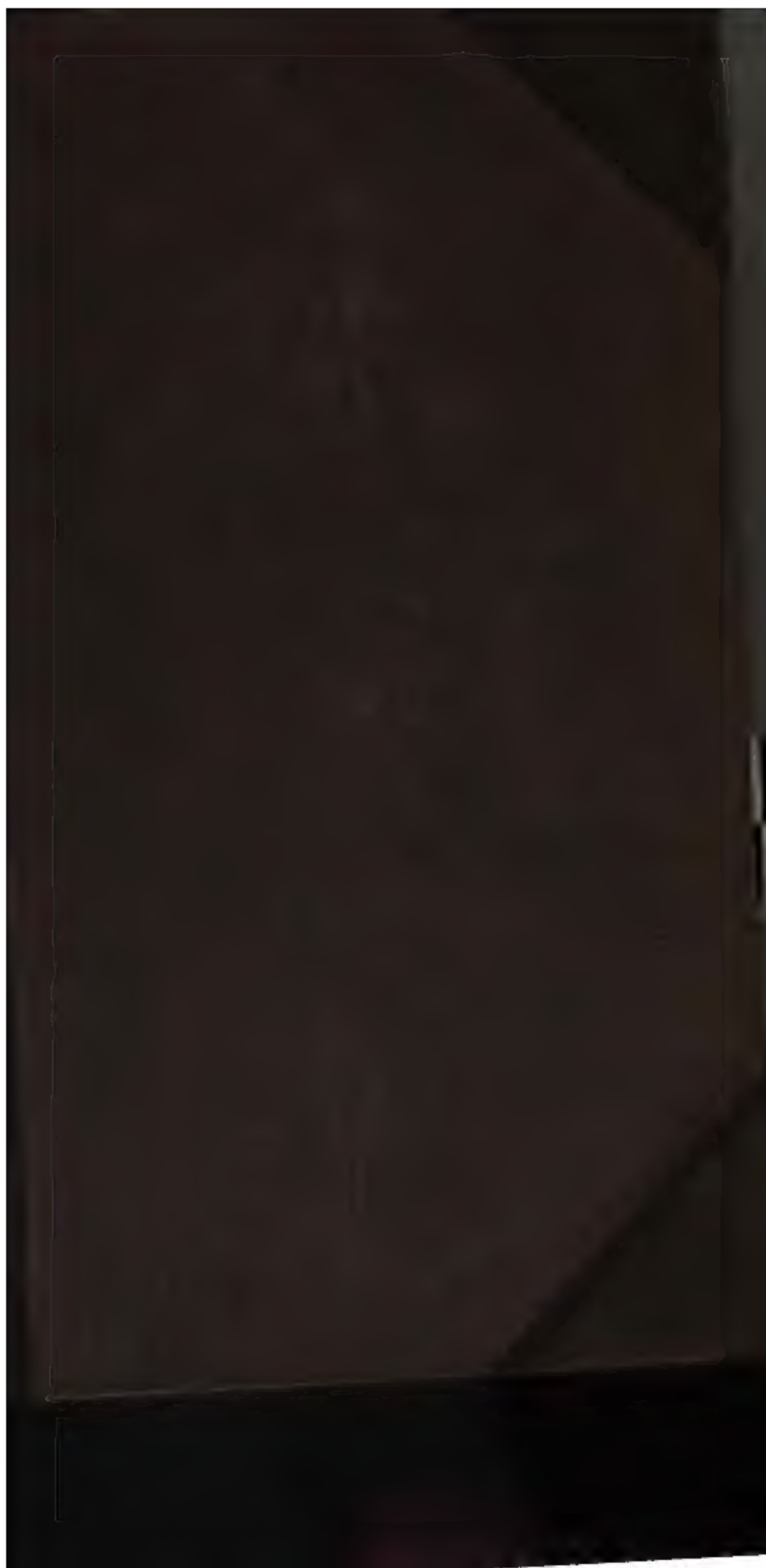
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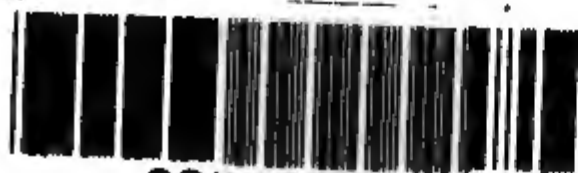
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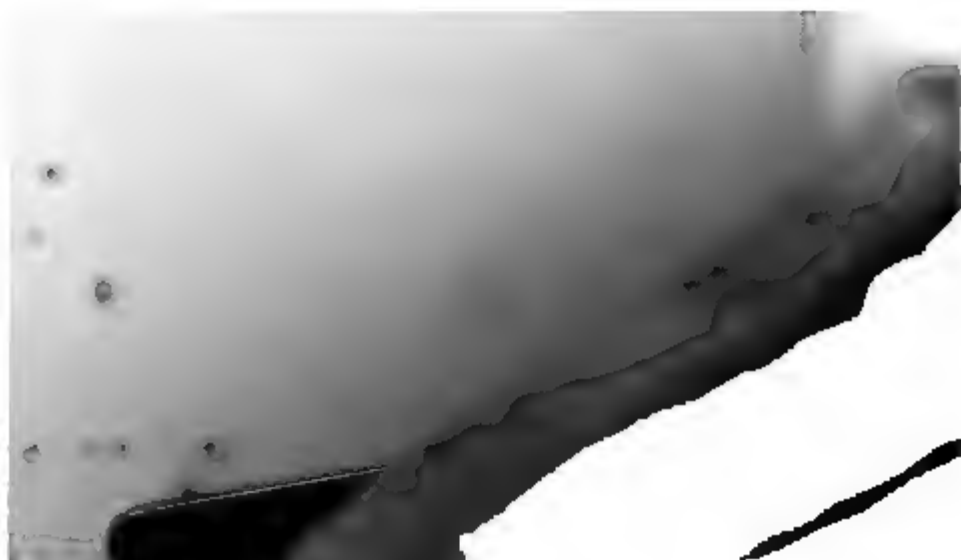


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THE REV. WILLIAM JACOBUS, M.A., OXFORD.

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(PART XVIII.)



**STORIES
AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION
OF THE COLLECTS;**

OR,

A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

**EDITED BY
THE REV. WILLIAM JACKSON, M.A. OXON.**

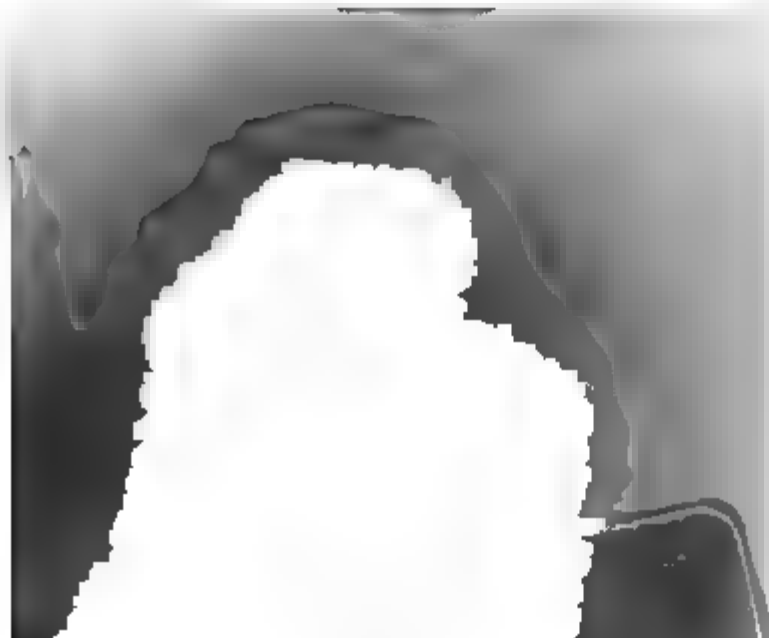


**LONDON:
JOHN AND CHARLES MOZLEY, PATERNOSTER ROW;
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1851.**

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‘Yes, he is waiting for us down the hill with the other boys; so be quick, Alfred.’

In a few minutes Alfred was ready, and, calling for Francis Light, they set off to join their companions. The party consisted of Edward and Charley Coote, two brothers, Alfred Mason, Francis Light, George Hickley, Fred Elwood, Samuel Arkwright, and Henry and Andrew North, also brothers. Andrew, although the same age as most of the other boys, had only lately come into the class, as he was very backward in reading; but he was a steady boy, and he had therefore, although behind the others in learning, been admitted into the first class a little while before. The younger boys, David Hart, James Lunn, and Edgar Morris, were not of the party.

‘Let us go up Highcliff Hill,’ said Edward, ‘and then we can have a good run down to warm ourselves, and just be in time for Miss Walton.’

The attendance at the Sunday School of Forley was very large. Both boys and girls met together in one school-room, and often on fine Sundays there were more children than it could well contain, while the number of voices made it almost unbearable; Miss Walton therefore often assembled her boys after the rest of the children had broken up, between the hours of three and four, that they might have more space, and be in greater quiet. Such was her arrangement on the Sunday in question.

‘And who is Miss Walton?’ perhaps some of my readers may be inclined to ask, so I will tell them before we return to the boys.

Miss Walton was the sister of the clergyman of Forley, and had now been many years living with her brother, and teaching the boys of the first class. She was always fond of boys, and chose to teach them in preference to the girls, an arrangement which *suit*ed well with her brother’s wishes, for *he* loved *her* to see about him the joyous innocent faces of

‘the maidens,’ as they called themselves, and to watch their more gentle ways. He did not neglect the boys, but he preferred teaching the maidens for a constancy.

Mr Walton ought not perhaps to be called quite an old man, though his bald head and fast whitening hair gave him a venerable appearance, and made him look older than he really was. Yet having passed the middle stage of life, and having worked hard in the vineyard of his Lord for now nearly thirty years, he often felt symptoms of approaching old age, and he used to say that, as an old man, he would enjoy the bright smiles and gentle voices of the maidens, and leave the more noisy gladness of the boys to his sister.

Miss Walton was only a few years younger than her brother, but she had lost little of the buoyancy and fresh feelings of youth; and the high spirits, the love of freedom, the courage, and almost boisterous mirth of boyhood, it was her delight to watch and guide—not to crush, but to control, or lead to their proper objects. She therefore loved her class of boys, and they most fully returned her love, and even in their wildest moments a look or word from her would generally recall them to thoughtfulness. She sympathized with them in all their joys and sorrows, she helped them as she could in their boyish sports, and assisted them out of their boyish troubles; and they in return, on the whole, endeavoured to mind her teaching, to remember her words of warning, to fear her anger, and to value her approbation. I do not mean that all were alike, or that all were equally influenced by her teaching; on the contrary, as you will see for yourselves, some were heedless, some wilful, some changeable and uncertain. Yet she loved them! striving to rouse the heedless, to reclaim the evil, to steady the changeable, and to encourage and help the good and *thoughtful*.

And now, I think, I need not stay longer to describe Miss Walton and her boys, for you must learn to know them for yourselves, dear readers, as you proceed with the story; and you will also be able to see how far the boys were influenced by what they learned; and while you read of their lessons and of their doings, I trust that their example will not be lost upon yourselves; but that while you admire those that are courageously good, you will endeavour to be the same; and while you condemn the faults of which some were guilty, you will also try to avoid them. And let the holy truths contained in the catechisings be always read and thought about with reverence and attention, and not passed over as dry and uninteresting. And now we will return to the boys.

It was a bleak Sunday in December, and, glad of a walk, they set off in high spirits, and soon forgot the cold.

‘So Miss Walton is better, and able to teach us boys this afternoon, is she?’ said Francis.

‘Oh, yes, she’s better,’ answered Charley, ‘and she says we are to say the Collect this afternoon, as we did not say it in the morning. Do you know it?’

‘Yes, I never forget the collect for to-day,’ he replied.

‘I’m afraid I don’t know mine, then,’ said Henry, who had a bad habit of putting off learning his lessons until the last moment, and then glancing at his book to see the beginning, as he handed it to Miss Walton.

‘Oh, don’t you?’ Alfred called out; ‘unless you learn it now, you’ll not have time. Here’s my Prayer-Book, you can learn it as you go along, if you like.’

‘No, that I shan’t, it is too cold for such work,’ returned Henry.

‘*Hark’ee!* what was that noise!’ cried Fred. ‘A

gun firing, I do believe. Yes! there it is again. Let's go and see. The sound comes from yonder,' he said, pointing down to their left hand.

The boys ran eagerly in the direction Fred pointed out, and soon came in sight of a party of men, who now stood reloading their guns.

'Here will be some fun for us,' shouted Henry, stopping at a little distance, when he saw what they were about, 'we can beat the hedges for them, and I dare say they will give us something for it.'

'Oh, no,' cried Alfred and Charley in one breath, 'not to-day, it is Sunday.'

'Well, supposing it is, if it is no harm for them to go shooting, it's no harm for us to help them,' replied Henry.

'Oh, but it is harm, I am sure,' returned Charley. 'What would Miss Walton say?'

'Miss Walton will never know anything about it,' answered Henry; 'and if she does, it can make no difference to her whether we take a walk or beat the hedges for the shooters, so let us go. Now do.'

'I shan't go,' replied Edward. 'You know very well, Henry, that Miss Walton only likes us to take a quiet walk on Sunday, and she would think beating the hedges a very different thing; and you know very well you wouldn't think of going with the shooters if she was here.'

'Besides,' added Alfred, 'if Miss Walton had nothing to do with it, I am sure it would be wrong, so let us go back.'

At that moment one of the men called out, 'Come here, lads, come and beat the hedges for us, and find the birds we kill.'

Henry instantly ran forward and offered himself, but the others hung back. Samuel looked as if he would greatly like to go, and was only prevented by Edward's example, who exercised a great influence over the boys.

‘We can do with more than one,’ the same man called out again. ‘Come, boys.’

Had it not been Sunday how gladly would Alfred have run to them, for he had too much of the thorough boy about him not to enjoy field sports. Yet now he resolutely resisted the temptation. Samuel, however, had not the same resolution, and saying, ‘I’ll be back directly,’ he followed Henry.

‘Don’t go, Sam,’ Edward called out after him, ‘you won’t get away in time for school,’ but Sam ran on without heeding.

‘Don’t let us stand here,’ said Fred, ‘or I am sure I shall be going too. Wouldn’t it be *just about* fine fun?’

‘I should *think* it would,’ returned Francis. ‘I wish it was not Sunday.’

‘Come,’ said Edward, ‘I think we have still time to get to the top of Highcliff,’ and turning round, he began to retrace his steps, followed by the rest of the boys. But they were no longer in the high spirits they had been when starting. Henry and Sam having left them, threw a damp over the party for some time.

‘I wish they had not gone,’ whispered Charley to Alfred. ‘Isn’t it wrong to shoot to-day?’

‘I should think it is,’ replied Alfred. ‘Why, they can’t have been to Church. But oh, if it had not been Sunday, I should so like to have gone with them.’

‘Well, I don’t care much about it,’ said George, who had joined them, ‘I am always frightened at the guns.’

You may be sure George was laughed at for this, and Alfred began to prove that no one was ever shot if he only knew how to manage a gun, which no doubt *he* most fully believed *he* did; and thus conversation went on until they had reached the top of *the hill*, then thinking it time to return, they called

out, 'Now for a run,' and set off down again at full speed.

'I'll be at the bottom first,' shouted Edward. And so he was, Alfred next, and George last, all out of breath and very hot. The run seemed to raise their spirits again, and they returned on their way home merrily. They reached the school just as the rest of the children had dispersed. 'Now, boys, are you all here?' said Miss Walton, and calling over the names, she first found Edgar Morris absent.

'Please, ma'am, I was to ask leave for him; he's gone to his aunt's,' said Andrew.

'And where are Henry and Samuel?' she asked. The boys looked at each other, and did not answer.

'Can none of you tell me?' she inquired.

'Please, ma'am, I think they'll soon be here,' said Francis. 'We left them in the fields.'

'They ought to have been here now,' said Miss Walton; 'I cannot wait, we must begin without them.'

When the lesson was about half over, the two guilty boys entered, with their smocks dirty and torn. But the truth of where they had been, and what they had been doing, never came to Miss Walton's ears. They made some false excuses for their lateness, and Henry said he had fallen, and so soiled and torn his smock. They were blamed and in disgrace for being late, but that was all the punishment they received from Miss Walton. But though their evil deed was not known to her, it was not hidden from the Eye of God, to whom all things are naked and open. They contrived to deceive Miss Walton, but they could not deceive *Him*. Nor were they at all to be envied for thus escaping punishment. Better it would have been for them to have received it then, and been so brought to repentance, than to go on unpunished and impenitent. And do you think *the other boys repented* not having joined in their

unlawful pleasure, when they saw no immediate punishment follow, and when the bright sixpences were displayed? No, I do not think they did. The answer of a good conscience was better to them than the short-lived pleasure which Henry and Samuel had enjoyed. And though these boys escaped punishment at school, they suffered, and justly, for their dirty, torn smocks, when they reached home.

We must now, however, return to the lesson. Each boy having said the Collect in turn, the Epistle and Gospel having been read, and the books closed, Miss Walton said :—

‘What day is to-day, boys?’

‘Advent Sunday,’ they all replied.

Miss Walton. What does Advent mean?

All. Coming.

Miss Walton. Yes; now in the Collect whose coming is mentioned?

Fred. Jesus Christ’s.

Miss Walton. How many comings are named?

Francis. Two.

Miss Walton. Which is spoken of first?

Edward. ‘Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility.’

Miss Walton. When did He come in humility?

Charley. When He was born of the Virgin Mary.

Miss Walton. But we are not commemorating His birth now, are we?

Fred. No, but we shall be at Christmas.

Miss Walton. Yes, but before Christmas, what season comes?

Alfred. Advent.

Miss Walton. Advent, then, is a preparation for Christmas. What must we prepare ourselves to commemorate then?

‘Christ’s first coming,’ said several.

Miss Walton. And what other coming is mentioned in the Collect?

George. Christ's second coming 'to judge the quick and dead.'

Miss Walton. And how will He then come?

David. In glorious majesty.

Miss Walton. Then during Advent we are to prepare for what else besides Christmas joys?

Francis. Christ's second coming in majesty.

Miss Walton. That is right. We must then try to prepare ourselves during Advent to *commemorate rightly* our Saviour's first coming 'in great humility' at Christmas; and to *meet Him* at His second coming in 'glorious majesty.' Let us see from the Collect how we are to do this. What do we pray in the Collect we may have grace to do, Andrew?

Andrew. 'Cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light.'

Miss Walton. When are we to do this?

Alfred. 'Now in the time of this mortal life.'

Miss Walton. Is there any other life spoken of in the Collect?

George. Yes, the 'life immortal.'

Miss Walton. Can any of you tell me the meaning of 'mortal life'?

The boys did not answer immediately, so Miss Walton continued—'You are now, boys, strong and well, but will it always be so?'

'No,' answered little James.

Miss Walton. What may God send upon you any day?

Francis. Sickness.

Miss Walton. Yes; and how does sickness often end?

'In death,' answered Charley, softly.

Miss Walton. When you die, what will have passed away?

'This life,' said Andrew.

Miss Walton. Yes, but in the Collect what is it called?

Fred. 'Mortal life.'

Miss Walton. Now, can any of you tell me what 'mortal life' means?

'A life that will end in death,' said Edward.

Miss Walton. Yes, that is right, and *immortal* means—

'A life which cannot die,' again he answered.

Miss Walton. What, then, are we subject to in this life?

Fred. Death.

Miss Walton. But how will it be in the life to come?

'There will be no death,' said Alfred.

'This "mortal life" is given to us to prepare for the "life immortal,"' said Miss Walton. 'In order to do this, what are we to "cast away?"'

'The works of darkness,' answered David.

Miss Walton. What is meant by the works of darkness?

'All sin,' replied several.

Miss Walton. But why are sins called 'the works of darkness?' Who tempts man to sin?

James. The Devil.

Miss Walton. Yes, the prince of darkness. Look what St. Paul says of this in Eph. vi. 12.

Alfred. 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the *rulers of the darkness of this world.*'

Miss Walton. Our Saviour also speaks of the 'prince of this world,' both in St. John, xii. 31, and xiv. 30. Of whom are our Saviour and St. Paul speaking?

Andrew. Of the Devil.

Miss Walton. He is the ruler of darkness, or the 'prince of this world,' and as all sins come from him, they are called the 'works of darkness.' But do you think there are any other reasons?

'*Because,*' said Alfred, 'people who commit great *s, do them in the dark.*'

Miss Walton. What sort of sins, Alfred?

Alfred. Stealing and murder.

‘Yes, and many others besides,’ said Miss Walton; ‘and when people hide the evil thing they are doing, or have done, is it not like doing it in the dark? How is it with you, boys? would you do what Mr. Walton told you not to do, if you thought he saw you?’

‘No, ma’am,’ said Francis.

Miss Walton. When you laugh and talk in Church, you do it when you think no one is looking at you. Is it not so?

With blushing faces they answered, ‘Yes, ma’am.’

‘Then you try to hide your fault,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘or do it in the dark; your sin is a work of darkness, the devil, the “prince of darkness,” tempting you to it. What does our Saviour say about the evil doers hating the light? You, George, can repeat the text, I dare say.’

And, as usual, George was ready with it, and, standing up, repeated, ‘Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d.’ (St. John, iii. 20.)

Just before Miss Walton said this, Henry and Samuel had entered. They were quite frightened while she spoke, fancying that she knew how they had been deceiving her, and was speaking of them when she talked of the sin of hiding faults; but she knew nothing of it, and did not pay particular attention to them, as they had not heard the beginning of the lesson. It was their own evil consciences which made them uneasy, as an evil conscience ever will do.

‘And now,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘for the third reason why sins are called “works of darkness.” Where will the wicked go to after death?’

‘Into Hell,’ said David.

Miss Walton. And hell is a place of darkness

can you tell me why? From whose presence are the wicked excluded?

Several. From the presence of God.

Miss Walton. Who does St. John say is the Light of the world?

‘Our Saviour, Jesus Christ,’ said Charley, reverently bowing his head.

Miss Walton. Then, if we are shut out from His presence, we are shut out from the light, and are in—what?

‘Darkness,’ replied Alfred.

Miss Walton. That is right. Sins, then, are called, thirdly, ‘works of darkness,’ because they lead—whither?

‘To the place of darkness,’ said Edward.

Miss Walton. And what do we pray we may have grace to do with ‘the works of darkness?’

Andrew. To cast them away.

Miss Walton. And when we cast them away, are we to put anything on in their place?

Fred. Yes, ‘the armour of light.’

Miss Walton. Whose armour is that?

George. The armour of God.

Miss Walton. Yes, God is light, and His armour is the ‘armour of light.’ And why are we to put on armour?

‘Because we have to fight, and armour is used in battle,’ said Edward.

‘Well, now,’ said Miss Walton, ‘I think we shall be able to see how we are to use Advent. What must you fight against?’

Andrew. ‘The works of darkness.’

Miss Walton. And when are you to fight?

Fred. ‘In the time of this mortal life.’

Miss Walton. What will follow this life?

James. The judgment.

Miss Walton. Of what will you then have to give account?

George. Of all our actions.

Miss Walton. And how will our Saviour come in that day?

Edward. In 'glorious majesty,' surrounded by His Holy Angels.

Miss Walton. Shall we *then* have time to repent and do what is right?

'No, it will be too late then,' said Alfred, thoughtfully.

Miss Walton. Is it too late now?

All. No, ma'am.

'No, thank God!' said Miss Walton, 'it is not too late yet; but it will be when Christ comes to judge us, for then you will have to give an account of *how* you have fought, *how* you have used the armour God has provided for you. And shall you *then* be able to hide your sins?'

Edward. No, for 'there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in *darkness* shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house tops.' (St. Luke, xii. 2, 3.)

Miss Walton. Remember this, boys, *during Advent* especially, and let the thought of the judgment to come, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, make you fight more earnestly, lest you should be sent away from the Light to dwell in everlasting darkness. Can you fight in your own strength?

Charley. No, God must help us.

Miss Walton. And do you in the Collect ask Him to help you?

Francis. Yes, we pray Him to give us grace.

Miss Walton. Through whom?

Edward. Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth *with the Father and the Holy Ghost.*

Miss Walton. When you say 'through Jesus Christ,' what do you mean?

All. For His sake, because He died for us.

Miss Walton. Yes, He died for us when He came in 'great humility,' and if you would be ready for Him when He comes to judge the quick and dead, you must seek help of Him now, to cast away the works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light. But before we finish the lesson, tell me, does either the Epistle or Gospel teach you any particular duty? You may look at your books and see.

'To love one another,' answered George.

Miss Walton. And if we love one another we shall neither—?

'Kill, nor steal, nor bear false witness, nor covet,' answered Edward.

'There is here, then, boys, a particular duty that you may strive after during Advent,' said *Miss Walton*. 'You must try and learn to love one another more; to be kind to one another. What is the opposite of love?

Fred. Hatred and quarrelling.

Miss Walton. Yes; I am glad to say I do not see much quarrelling among you, boys, but I *do* see that you have not the love one to another which St. Paul bids you have. How are we to love one another?

George. As ourselves.

Miss Walton. But when you come into school, what seat do you each try and get for yourselves?

'The best,' said Francis.

Miss Walton. And when I am lending you books, and there is one more interesting than the others, what do you each feel about it?

'We wish to have it,' said Samuel.

'Exactly,' continued *Miss Walton*. 'Now, if you *loved your school-fellows as much as yourselves, how would it be?*'

‘We should wish to please them as much as ourselves,’ answered Alfred.

‘One more instance,’ said Miss Walton. ‘When a game of play has to be chosen, whose likes do you generally first consider?’

‘Our own,’ said Francis.

Miss Walton. It would then be well for you, boys, to watch during Advent against this one fault especially. Try to think of others before yourselves, and give up your own wills to please your companions; and every time you overcome your own wishes for the sake of others you will be casting away the ‘works of darkness.’ But can you watch and improve in your own strength?

‘No, ma’am,’ said Charley.

Miss Walton. You must, therefore, daily pray to God to help you; and you could not do better than add to your morning and evening prayers, during Advent, this Collect, keeping in your minds the one fault you have set yourselves to overcome, and meditating for a little while on that awful day when you will have to give an account of every unkind action, word, or even thought. Will you try?

‘Yes, ma’am,’ softly answered some few.

‘And now, boys,’ said Miss Walton, ‘you may go; and let me see you all at Church this evening.’

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Second Sunday in Advent.

COLLECT.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of Thy Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SINCE the first Sunday in Advent, the day on which the boys had walked up Highcliff Hill, a great change had taken place in the weather. Then it was indeed cold, but the cold was clear and bright; but on the second Sunday in Advent, rain, mixed with sleet and hail, was falling fast, and a cutting wind was blowing, that pierced the children through and through. When, however, Miss Walton was well, bad weather did not keep her away from school, and by nine o'clock she was there, waiting for the arrival of the children. One by one they kept dropping in, cold and wet, and with dripping umbrellas. The girls who came from a distance, crowded round the fire to dry their frocks before prayers began, at a quarter after nine o'clock. Miss Walton never allowed them to sit down in wet clothes. Presently Edward and Charley Coote, who lived at some little distance from the school, entered. Their smocks were somewhat wet, and their first impulse was to push away some of the girls from the fire, and to

dry them, when suddenly, seeming to recollect themselves, they turned away and took their places. Miss Walton, ever on the watch for improvement, noticed this remembrance of the last Sunday's lesson, and felt pleased and encouraged, and in a few minutes afterwards, finding that the dresses of Lucy Strange and Eliza Bush were dry, she sent them to their seats, and said, 'Now, Edward and Charley, come to the fire.' Charley, who was very quick at reading Miss Walton's thoughts, looked in her face with a bright smile, as he took his place close to the blazing wood, while she whispered to him, 'I am glad you remembered.'

I will now tell my readers something about Charley. He was four or five years younger than Edward, and, at the time of which I am speaking, was eleven years old. He had lost his mother about eighteen months previously. His father was living, but was far from setting a good example to his boys, for he was sadly intemperate, and very passionate; yet he was fond of them, and kind to them when sober. Charley had also two sisters younger than himself, and a baby-brother. The poor child's home was not very comfortable, his sisters being too young to do much house-work. It fell, therefore, mostly to Edward and Charley. Sometimes they cooked the dinner; sometimes scrubbed the floors, and even at times washed their own clothes. But Charley was, notwithstanding, a happy boy, for he found amusement in every thing, being of a very cheerful temper. He was somewhat given to mischief, and when once the spirit of fun fairly possessed him, he often grew too wild, and it was hard to sober him down again. Even Miss Walton on such occasions might sometimes speak in vain, for he *would* not believe that she was in earnest. In this way he often *brought himself* into trouble and sorrow; yet on the *whole* he was a good boy, very affectionate, really

conscientious and thoughtful, and deeply penitent after a fault. Oh! how grieved he was, when one day, having been very wild at the beginning of a lesson, and making others inattentive by his odd ways and funny speeches, Miss Walton had at last been obliged to punish him, and he, in a pet, ran away when they came out of school, instead of going down to Church. He had not, however, proceeded far when better thoughts came into his mind, and, turning round, he followed the rest of the boys down to Church. In the meantime Miss Walton, having consulted with her brother, decided that she must do something then, to teach Charley that such wildness, followed by pettish tempers, was really wrong, and not to be lightly overlooked; and, therefore, when he came to the Church door she sent him away, saying that he was not fit to come into the house of God in the naughty temper he had just given way to, and that he must go home and think over his fault. She was really very sorry to do this, but Charley's fault had been great, and it was not the first of the kind. When in the afternoon he went again to school, he was punished for having left the ranks, and very grieved he seemed to be for his idleness, his irreverence, and his cross temper, and very bitterly he cried about it. He was not any longer angry about being punished, but thoroughly subdued and penitent. When the lesson was over, and the boys began to disperse, Charley hung back as though longing to make complete friends with Miss Walton; she therefore allowed him to stay, and took that opportunity of talking to him about his faults, and again his tears flowed very fast.

'I have been so very, very unhappy ever since,' he said; 'and do you know what I thought when you shut me out of Church?'

'No, Charley,' she answered, 'I do not. I hope it *was not a naughty thought*. I hope you did not *feel more angry*.'

‘No,’ he replied, ‘I don’t think it was a naughty thought;’ and in a moment he continued, ‘I thought that your shutting me out of Church was like being shut out of heaven, and I thought if I died then, I *should* be shut out of heaven; and it made me so frightened. I had nearly come in though you told me not, and I didn’t go away for ever so long, but I listened outside to what was going on, and I thought it so dreadful that I might not come in; and then I remembered that you told me to go home, and I thought I should be more naughty if I stayed any longer, and so I went home and prayed to God to forgive me; but oh! I was very, very unhappy.’

Poor Charley! It was well for him that he did thus sorrow, for ‘God is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit.’ One very good point about Charley was, that he would never promise to do any thing without first giving it due consideration; but in the end he generally chose the right.

It will have been seen that on coming wet into school he had done so, although he was not one of the promisers on the previous Sunday.

By the time Edward and Charley’s smocks were dry, the rest of the children had arrived, and Miss Walton having read prayers, proceeded to catechise her class. A great number of the little children were kept away by the rain, which made the school much quieter than usual.

The Collect having been said, and the Epistle and Gospel read, Miss Walton asked: ‘Is Advent over yet?’

Several. No.

Miss Walton. How long will it last?

George. Until Christmas-day—four Sundays.

Miss W. And this is the—?

‘*Second Sunday in Advent,*’ replied James.

Miss W. What is the subject of the Collect to-day?

Edward. The right reading of the Bible.

Miss W. For what does the Collect say the Holy Scriptures are written, Charley?

Charley. 'For our learning.'

Miss W. Who wrote the Bible? Look at 2 Peter, i. 21. They found it, and Francis read: 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Very well, holy men wrote the words, but who inspired them?

Charley. The Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Look again in the 2 Tim. iii. 16-17, and, Fred, you read it.

Fred. 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'

Miss W. The words, then, are the words of men, but the teaching is from God, and it is given 'for our learning.' But do all who read God's Word learn from it?

Alfred. No, ma'am.

Miss W. Why not?

George. Because they read carelessly.

Miss W. Yes, really to be benefited by God's Holy Word, we must 'hear, read'—?

'Mark, learn, and inwardly digest,' said several.

Miss W. When do you 'hear' God's Word read?

Edward. At Church, in the Lessons, Epistle, and Gospel.

Miss W. And you 'read' it—?

George. In the Psalms.

'And at home,' said Alfred.

Miss W. But you are not only to 'hear' and 'read' it, but to 'mark, learn, and inwardly digest' it. What is meant by 'mark'?

Edward. To pay attention.

Miss W. Yes; and 'learn?'

Alfred. Learn by heart.

Miss Walton smiled, and said, 'Perhaps that may be one meaning, and it is very good for us to learn God's Word off by heart; but something else is meant by 'learn.' Do you always understand what you read?'

All. No: not unless we are taught.

Miss W. And are you taught to understand all at once, or by degrees?

Samuel. By degrees.

Miss W. Very well, 'learn' means *to get to understand*, and it will be a continued work, for every day we must learn something new until we come to understand, and inwardly digest. But is the Bible like a common book? Can we learn it as we would any thing else?

All. No.

Miss W. Who must teach us rightly to learn the Holy Scriptures?

Edward. The Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Yes; the Holy Ghost must help us in our learning, that we may do it with our hearts as well as minds. Many people may read the Bible, and get to understand it, as they would a common book, but never *really* enter into its spiritual meaning; never *learn* it, as the Collect teaches us to pray to God we may do. But having read, marked, and learned the Holy Scriptures, what is to come next? Andrew, you have not answered.

'Inwardly digest them,' he replied.

Miss W. In common life what do we speak of digesting?

Edward. Food.

Miss W. When is food said to be digested?

Edward. When it has done us good, and strengthened us.

Miss W. That is right. When will the Bible have done us good?

George. When we shall have learned to obey it.

Miss W. Yes, when it shall have become the rule of our heart, and the guide of our actions. When our blessed Saviour was in the wilderness, how did He answer all the Devil's temptations?

Francis. By what was written in the Bible.

Miss W. Yes. We have an instance also in one of the kings of Judah, of the right hearing of the Word of God. Can you remember which?

George. Josiah; when the law was read to him, he rent his clothes and humbled himself.

Miss W. You may read the account in 2 Kings, xxii., verses, 11—13, and 19, 20. Alfred, you read it.

Alfred. 'And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes, and the king commanded Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Ackbor, the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan, the scribe, and Asahiah, a servant of the king's, saying, Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us. . . Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation, and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold, therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.'

Miss W. You see, then, that Josiah heard the

word of God and acted upon it. Do you remember any others who in time of great temptation were influenced by the law of God written in their hearts? Who were the three who refused to obey Nebuchadnezzar's wicked decree?

All. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Miss W. How did they know they were not to worship an image?

Edward. Because they knew the law of God forbade it.

Miss W. That is right. You have now given me three examples. Our blessed Saviour answered the devil's temptation by quoting the Bible; Josiah, on hearing it read, *acted* upon it immediately; and the three holy children, as they are called, were guided by it, I may say almost without thinking of it. The law of God was, as it were, written in their hearts. They had read, marked, learned, and—?

'Inwardly digested the Holy Scriptures,' said Edward.

Miss W. And how are *we* to learn thus 'inwardly to digest' the Holy Scriptures? If you never think of what you read, can you do so?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. When you think of anything for a *long time together*, what is it called?

Alfred. Meditating.

'Yes,' continued Miss Walton, 'having marked and learned God's Holy Word, you must meditate upon it, so as to impress its lessons on your minds, and let them become as it were a part of yourselves; even as food does when it is digested. *It* strengthens you for your daily work, so hearing the word of God strengthens you for your daily—?'

'Duties,' said Edward.

Miss W. I hope now, boys, that you understand these three rules by which you are to hear and read *God's Holy Word*. Tell me them once more, that

I may be quite sure, in as few words as you can. 'Mark' means—?

'To pay attention,' answered several.

Miss W. And 'learn'?

'To get to understand,' again they replied.

Miss W. Yes, by the help of God—and 'inwardly digest' means?

'To have God's word in our hearts, and act upon it,' said Edward, Francis, and some others.

Miss W. Let me now see whether you can tell me how these depend upon, and follow one another. Before we can inwardly digest the Scriptures, what must we have first done?

Alfred. Learned them.

Miss W. Yes, and before we can learn them we must have—?

'Marked them,' answered several.

Miss W. And before we can mark them we must either—?

'Hear or read them,' they quickly replied.

Miss W. Yes, boys, you must first hear or read the Holy Scriptures, and then go on to 'mark' them, which will help you to 'learn' them, and then having learned, you must 'inwardly digest' them; and in this Collect we pray to God that we may in such wise (or in such a manner) hear and read the Holy Scriptures, that by patience and comfort of God's Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast—what, boys?

Charley. The blessed hope of everlasting life.

Miss W. Where have we any promises of everlasting life?

Henry. In the Bible.

Miss W. If God had not revealed that life to us, should we have known of it?

George. No.

'No,' said Miss Walton, 'the heathen know nothing of a life to come; of the soul that will never

die. Some think such a thing *possible*, but they do not know it. To us, however, God has revealed it for our comfort, and the comfort of that hope makes us—do what?

‘Hold it fast,’ said Edward.

‘No,’ answered Miss Walton, ‘something must come before holding fast; you must first—?’

‘Embrace it,’ said Francis.

Miss W. Yes, the promises of everlasting life *comfort* us, when we have marked, learned, and inwardly digested them, and thus we embrace the hope. What do you mean by ‘embrace?’ What does a mother do when meeting a returning son?

Alfred. Embraces him.

Miss W. Yes, draws him to herself; in like manner we must take God’s promises to ourselves, or embrace them. Then *after* we have embraced the hope we are to—?

Edward. Hold it fast.

Miss W. When hope is deferred for a long time, what must we have to prevent its dying?

Fred. Patience.

‘Yes,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘by the comfort of God’s Word, which promises us everlasting life, we shall embrace the hope, and by patience we shall ever hold it fast. And we are taught thus patiently to wait in the Bible; look at Lam., iii. 26.

Samuel. ‘It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.’

Miss W. Or ‘patiently wait.’ Now read Psalm xxxvii., 7.

James. ‘Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him.’

Miss W. But everlasting life, and even the *hope* of it, is only given us—in whom?

Andrew. Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

‘Yes,’ said Miss Walton, ‘it is only by belonging *to Him, by being in Him*, that we can have hope.

But we have not time to-day, boys, to see *why* this is. We must leave it for some other lesson. Tell me now what subject did I say, last Sunday, you should try and meditate upon during Advent?

‘The judgment,’ said Charley.

‘Where can you read about it?’ said Miss Walton.

Henry. In the Bible.

Miss W. What is the Gospel about?

George. The last day.

‘Yes, boys, and if you would rightly prepare for that day, you must try to hear and read God’s Holy Word, as you here pray you may have grace to do,’ said Miss Walton. ‘You must mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, and try to meditate upon it as well as you can, asking God to help you. Why do I always make you say this Collect before you begin to read the Bible?’

Francis. Because, without the help of God, we could not read it rightly.

‘That is right,’ said Miss Walton; ‘and you must also try yourselves to be attentive. When the door opens while you are reading, you take your eyes off your books, and turn round to look. Is that being attentive?’

All. No, ma’am.

Miss W. And if you whisper to each other?

All. No, ma’am.

Miss W. Well, boys, remember this, and always try to read your Bibles carefully, as the Word of God and not of man. And at this season read, mostly, accounts of the last day, the Day of Judgment. Now it is time for Church: you will there have an opportunity of putting this lesson into practice.

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Third Sunday in Advent.

COLLECT.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at Thy first coming didst send Thy messenger to prepare Thy way before Thee, grant that the ministers and stewards of Thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Thy second coming to judge the world, we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight, who livest and reignest, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

ON Saturday evening, when Mr and Miss Walton had just finished tea, and were sitting down, she to her work, and he to reading, their maid opened the door, and said, 'Please, ma'am, Edward Coote wants to see either you or master.'

'Let him come up and speak to us,' was Miss Walton's reply.

Edward accordingly came to the parlour door, and knocking gently, entered the room, making a respectful bow at the door.

'Well, Edward, what do you want?' said Mr Walton.

Edward. Please, sir, Joseph Harrison is very bad to-night, and would be glad to see you.

'I am sorry to hear that,' said Mr Walton. 'I was with him this morning, and he seemed much as usual.'

Edward. Yes, sir; but about four o'clock a change

came over him, and Mrs Harrison doesn't think he'll live through the night.

'Oh, then, Edward, I'll come directly,' said Mr Walton. 'Are you going home again?'

Edward. No, sir, I'm going up to town for father.

Mr Walton then went to put on his great-coat, and Miss Walton said to Edward, 'Have you seen Joseph to-day?'

Edward. Yes, ma'am, I went in to see how he was this evening, and found him very bad; and when he said he should like to see Mr Walton, I told him I would call as I came past.

Miss Walton. I am glad you did. It is always right that sick people should send for their clergyman to be with them at the last. Joseph has always been glad to see Mr Walton from the beginning of his illness. He has lingered, perhaps, longer than he at first expected, but now I suppose his end is near.

Edward replied, 'Yes, ma'am, he said he was dying; and he said Mr Walton had talked to him about death, and he was willing to go when God should call him.'

'Indeed, Edward,' said Miss Walton, 'I believe he is prepared; he has tried to use the time God has given him to repent of his sins, and prepare for death. But I must not keep you now, or you will get home so late. Don't stay longer in the market than you are obliged.'

'No, ma'am,' he answered; and again making a bow, and saying, 'Good night, ma'am,' he left the room.

Not long after Edward had gone, a note was brought to Miss Walton. She opened it, and found it was from her brother, saying that Joseph was very ill, and that as he was not likely to live through the night, he wished then to receive the Holy Communion; and perhaps Miss Walton would like to come and receive it with him, and would bring down *the holy vessels*. Miss Walton accordingly quickly

put on her warm shawl and thick boots, for it was a bleak, winterly night, and set off, guarded by old William Highman, who had brought up Mr Walton's note. When she reached the cottage, she found all quiet in the lower room; so she gently ascended the stairs, and on entering the bed-chamber, saw Mr Walton sitting by the bedside, and poor Mrs Harrison standing near, sobbing in great grief. Joseph was propped up in bed, and in a gentle tone he was saying, 'Do not fret for me, dear Sally; we shall meet again in a short time. I am, I trust, going home, and you will soon come after me.'

Just then Miss Walton entered, and, approaching the bedside, took the hand of the dying man, and asked him how he was.

'I'm dying, ma'am,' he answered; 'I shall not be here long.' He drew his breath with difficulty, and then continued, 'I am glad you have come, ma'am; I longed to receive my Saviour's Body and Blood once more.'

'Yes, Joseph,' said Miss Walton, 'and it will be a means of supporting you through the valley of the shadow of death.'

In a calm, low tone, he continued, 'I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me.'

Mr Walton having now put on his surplice, and the holy vessels being arranged, they knelt round the sick man's bed. No sound was heard but his quick breathing, for the sobs of the poor wife were hushed in that hour of awful comfort. His eyes were turned upwards with a look of peaceful trust, and when Mr Walton approached him with those holy mysteries, a heavenly ray seemed to light up his pale countenance, as though he had caught a glimpse of the glories in store for him. All felt the deep solemnity of that hour, and realized more clearly the unseen world to which poor, but happy, Joseph was

so fast approaching. The solemn blessing fell sweetly on their ears, and the peace of God indeed rested upon them.

When Mr and Miss Walton rose to leave, and Mr Walton once more stood over the dying man's bed to pronounce his parting blessing—'Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit thee; the Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, both now and evermore, Amen'—Joseph took his hand, and, pressing it to his lips, said, 'Oh, sir, before you go, I must thank you for all you have done for me. It was you, sir, who led me to see my many, many sins, and showed me how to repent of them; and you who led me to my Saviour, and taught me how to trust in Him. Oh, sir, if God had not in mercy sent you to me, how could I have met death? God bless you, sir, and may we meet in heaven!'

'Amen,' said Mr Walton, solemnly.

For some time after leaving the house, Mr and Miss Walton walked on in silence; but when they reached the churchyard Mr Walton stopped, saying, 'Poor Joseph! his body will soon be laid in the grave, but his soul, I believe, will be at rest. His heart was truly turned from disobedience "to the wisdom of the just," and at the last day I trust he will be found among the acceptable people of God.'

'You have had great pleasure in visiting him, I think,' said Miss Walton.

'Indeed I have,' was his reply; 'he was so remarkably teachable; and though he never led what the world would call a wicked life, his repentance for his daily faults has been deep and sincere. In the days of his health he was not as careful as he ought to have been, and his work often kept him away from *Church, and the remembrance of this* grieved him.'

‘Yes,’ said Miss Walton, ‘he told me one day that if ever he got better again he would work for no master who would not give him time to come to Church, and that he deeply lamented ever having done so.’

They again walked on in silence, for the clouds had cleared away, and the moon was shining in all her beauty, seeming a fit type of the peaceful death-bed they had just left. Silence was surely the best expression of their feelings. Just as they reached their own gate, they saw Edward coming down from market. Mr Walton called him, and said, ‘Edward, will you come up and let me know how Joseph goes on the first thing in the morning?’

‘Yes, sir,’ he replied, ‘I will.’

But there was no need for this; for Mr and Miss Walton were awoke at six o’clock next morning by hearing the tolling-bell, giving notice of a departed soul, and they knew that Joseph had gone to his rest.

True, however, to his promise, Edward arrived by seven o’clock to tell them the tale they already knew. ‘He died, sir,’ said Edward, ‘about four o’clock this morning.’

‘Was he sensible to the last?’ asked Mr Walton.

Edward. Yes, sir, he was. I stayed with him after I went down from town until he died, and he was sensible all the time, and died quite peacefully.

‘Is it the first death-bed you have seen?’ asked Miss Walton.

Edward. No, ma’am, I was with my mother; but she died much more suddenly.

‘Well, Edward,’ said Mr Walton, kindly, ‘do not let the effect of what you have seen and heard last night pass away; but strive, my dear boy, to live such a life that whenever your hour of death may come, you may also be at peace, for your Saviour’s sake.’

The tears stole down poor Edward's cheeks, for Joseph having been a next door neighbour for many years, was well known to him, and he deeply felt his loss, and was softened by the awful scene he had just witnessed. He therefore answered Mr Walton's remarks with earnestness: 'Indeed, sir, I will try.'

That morning Miss Walton taught her class at her own house, instead of going to the school, while her brother went to keep order there. It was a great delight to her boys when they were allowed to come to her; they seemed to think Mr Walton's house a sort of Paradise, and there was no greater punishment than being kept away. Miss Walton often talked to them before or after their lesson about their work or play; but to-day she seemed disinclined to talk on common things.

'Good morning, boys,' she said when they entered.

'Good morning, ma'am,' they answered; and, as if they read her wishes in her manner, were quiet and serious too.

Edward was among them, and it may be that the great seriousness which was observable in *his* manner communicated itself to the other boys. When they were all seated in a circle round her, she began by asking:—

'To whom is the Collect for to-day addressed?'

All. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Are prayers generally addressed to Him?

All. No, to God the Father.

'*Through* Jesus Christ,' continued Edward.

'Yes, that is right,' said Miss Walton, 'but to-day, you see, we address God the Son, and again there are His two comings mentioned.'

'Yes, His first coming, and His second coming to judge the world,' said George.

Miss W. Who was sent before our Saviour's first coming?

Charley. A 'messenger.'

Miss W. Who was the messenger?

Fred. St. John the Baptist.

Miss W. What was the messenger sent for?

All. To prepare the way before Him.

Miss W. Are there any messengers to prepare the way before our Saviour's second coming?

Francis. Yes, 'ministers and stewards.'

Miss W. You mention both names; do you think they mean different people?

'No,' said Edward, 'they both mean clergymen.'

'Yes,' continued Miss Walton, 'the clergymen are both ministers and stewards—of what?'

Several. Of 'mysteries.'

Miss W. Before we go on with the Collect, let me see if you can tell me the difference between minister and steward, and why clergymen are called both: first tell me what is the meaning of 'to minister?' What does a nurse do for a sick person?

Charley. Wait upon them.

'Minister to them,' said Edward.

Miss W. And what does a servant do for a master and mistress?

Francis. Serve them.

Miss W. Yes; or what?

All. Minister to them.

Miss W. Then to minister means to—?

Several. Wait upon, or serve.

Miss W. And a minister is one—?

Edward. Who serves or ministers.

Miss W. Yes, that is right. Now tell me the duty of a steward.

Fred. To look after his master's business.

Miss W. Is a steward like a common servant?

Edward. No, he has more committed to him.

Miss W. Yes, he has to take care of his master's property as well as to serve him. Tell me some particulars of the duty of a steward.

Francis. He has to receive rents, and pay wages, and buy and sell for his master.

‘Very well,’ said Miss Walton. ‘And who gives him authority to do these things?’

All. His master.

Miss W. Now, then, you must tell me why *clergymen* are called ‘ministers’ and ‘stewards.’ But first tell me, are they called so in the Bible?

George. Yes, in the Epistle. ‘Let a man so account of us as of the *ministers* of Christ and *stewards* of the mysteries of God.’

Miss W. Samuel, you may now read 1 Peter, iv. 10.

Samuel. ‘As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good *stewards* of the manifold grace of God.’

Miss W. Why is a clergyman then called a steward? Who has committed a trust to him?

All. God.

Miss W. What is he a steward of?

‘The mysteries of God,’ said David?

Miss W. A clergyman then is called a steward, because to him are committed—?

‘The mysteries of God,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. You shall tell me what is meant by ‘mysteries,’ when you have told me why a clergyman is called a minister.

‘Because he ministers to the people,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, Charley, and also because he ministers to Christ in His people; and also ministers to the people in Christ’s stead; being *Christ’s* ‘minister.’ When does he minister to the people?

Edgar. In Church.

Miss W. Any other time?

‘When he visits the sick,’ said Edward. ‘Mr Walton ministered to poor Joseph.’

Miss W. Yes. I think you may say a clergyman *is ministering* to his people whenever he does any-

thing for them. He is in authority, like a steward, and yet a servant, the servant of Christ, and cheerfully the servant of all for Christ's sake. What does St. Paul say about this? Charley, you read 1. Cor., ix. 19.

Charley. 'For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.'

Miss W. A clergyman then is a steward, for God has committed to him a trust; he is a 'minister,' because—?

George. He ministers for Christ to the people.

Miss W. Yes. A clergyman is 'a man under authority,' having 'people under him.' He is in authority, because God has committed to him—what?

Fred. Mysteries.

Miss W. Yes, and put the people under him; and he is a 'minister,' or servant to those people. Is it not the same with a steward in common life? In looking after the interests of his master, he is actually serving the tenants. I will tell you a story about it:—There lived, many years ago, a very great Lord. He had many tenants under him, and much business to attend to. He was a kind landlord, and wished to make his dependants comfortable and happy; but it was impossible for him to look after all himself, so he appointed a trustworthy man to be his steward. He told him he expected him to look after all his business, to pay wages, to receive rents, to sell the cattle, to let the land, and overlook all the work-people, and many other things. At the same time he said, 'I expect you to be kind to my tenants, to assist them when they are in distress, to reprove them when they do wrong, to see that their children go to school, in short, to do all for them as I would myself. I leave all my property in your hands, and to me you will have to give an account of everything.'

Thus instructed, the steward went forth to his duties. He always kept in mind his master's interest, and the good of the people committed to his care. He knew that he stood in the place of his master, and that the people would look to him now, to learn the will of their master.

At length rent-day arrived, and multitudes came pouring in to pay their portion. Among the number there was a poor widow, who looked pale as she approached; but the steward spoke kindly to her, and bade her sit down. His kindness touched her heart, and she burst into tears, and said: 'Oh, sir, I have only got very little of my rent, for my husband was long ill, and there was nothing coming in all that time, and my eldest son has been ill, and is only just recovering, and his illness has lost him his situation, and he has now nothing to do.' The steward listened to her gravely, and thought within himself—'This rent is certainly due to my master, and, by selling her furniture, I suppose she would have enough to pay; but he told me I was to be kind to any in distress, and to assist them, instead of taking from them. I will go and see whether the poor woman's statements are true, and then decide how to act.' Accordingly, he took what rent she had brought, and when his business was over, set off for the poor woman's cottage. He found all her story true—that sickness had brought this distress upon her, and that she needed help. He therefore forgave her the rest of the rent, and also assisted her with some money of his own. Then calling her son to him, he desired him to come to his house in the morning and he should have work. He also took a younger boy into his master's employment, and the cottage not being in good order, he had it repaired. He then proceeded to his master, and gave him an *account* of what he had done. Of course his master *was quite satisfied*, and told him always to act in the

same way. On the following rent-day the poor widow was able to bring the whole amount, as her sons had been in constant work ever since.

Now, tell me, did this steward do his master's business, and serve the people committed to his trust at the same time?

'Yes, ma'am; particularly because he gave work to the poor widow's sons, so that she was able to pay her rent next year,' said several.

Miss W. Now, tell me, does a clergyman do the same? Edward, perhaps you can give me an example.

'Yes, ma'am, poor Joseph. Mr Walton served him by being kind to him, visiting him, reading to him, and praying with him,' said Edward.

Miss W. And he was a 'steward,' in that he did it for God. He ministered to Joseph those 'mysteries' which God had committed to him. Now, tell me, what is meant by 'mysteries?' What is a mystery?

Fred. Something we cannot understand.

Miss W. That is right. What mystery was that which our Saviour revealed to Nicodemus?

Alfred. About being born again.

Miss W. Of what?

Charley. Water and the Holy Ghost.

Miss W. What remark did Nicodemus make?

George. 'How can these things be?'

Miss W. Yes, the doctrine of a new birth was a mystery to him. What example did our Saviour give of mysteries in common life?

Francis. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.'

Miss W. Can you mention any other mysteries? something that you daily see, and yet cannot understand?

'How the corn grows,' said Alfred.

‘Why a river is always running, yet never gets empty,’ said Charley.

‘Yes, indeed,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘these are mysterious things, that we see and cannot understand. Now, tell me some mystery in heavenly things, besides that of the new birth?’

Edward. The Holy Communion.

Miss W. When our Saviour taught His disciples that He would give them His Body and Blood to eat, what did some of those standing by reply?

Alfred. ‘This is a hard saying; who can hear it?’

‘And—“How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”’ continued George.

Miss W. Very well. So great was the mystery, that we are told, from that time—?

‘Many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him,’ continued Edward.

Miss W. Two mysteries, then, in heavenly things, you have mentioned; but, in truth, everything connected with God and another world, is a mystery; what death is, for instance, or how we shall rise again; and there are still deeper mysteries than these, of which I will not now speak to you, the mysteries of the Divine Nature, Three Persons in one God, of which our Saviour would not speak to Nicodemus. And the clergymen are—what?

‘Ministers and stewards of these mysteries,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes. Who administer the two Sacraments and preach the Gospel in the Church?

All. Clergymen.

Miss W. From whom do they receive authority to do it?

Several. From God.

Miss W. Yes. The Apostles received their authority immediately from Christ, and committed it to those who succeeded them in the ministry.

Miss W. What do we pray in the Collect 'the ministers and stewards' may likewise do?

James. 'Likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way before Thee.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'likewise' there?

Francis. In like manner as St. John the Baptist did.

Miss W. Yes. As St. John prepared the way before our Saviour's first coming, so clergymen may now prepare the way before His second coming. How do we pray they may do so?

Andrew. By turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.

Miss W. Who are meant by the disobedient?

Edgar. Wicked people.

Miss W. What are they to be turned to?

Fred. The wisdom of the just.

Miss W. And by 'the just' are meant—?

Charley. Good people.

Miss W. Do you remember any good people in the Bible being called just?

George. Joseph, the husband of Mary.

Miss W. Yes; and David speaks in the Psalms of the just.

Edward. 'The ungodly seeketh counsel against the just.' Psalm xxxvii. 12.

Miss W. Also in Psalm cxi. 13.

Francis. 'The just shall continue in Thy sight.'

Miss W. By the disobedient, then, is meant not only those who live openly wicked lives, but—?

Alfred. All those who are not really trying to do right.

Miss W. We pray, then, that the ministers may prepare the way before our Saviour, 'by turning their hearts to the wisdom of the just.' How do they try to do this?

Edward. By preaching to them, visiting them when they are sick, and reproving them when they do wrong.

Miss W. What did St. John the Baptist preach before our Saviour's first coming?

George. 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Miss W. Do 'ministers' now preach the same?

All. Yes, ma'am.

Miss Walton then said very seriously to her boys, 'You have lately had an example before you of one who, by the teaching of God's minister, was truly turned from disobedience to the wisdom of the just. You, Edward, can tell me whom I mean.

Edward answered in a low tone, 'Poor Joseph.'

'Yes,' continued Miss Walton; 'he had never lived an openly wicked life, yet he felt the need of repentance, and thanked God for giving him time to repent before he went to meet his Judge.'

'Yes, ma'am, and he said it was Mr Walton who taught him all,' exclaimed Edward.

'God did use Mr Walton as the means, I believe,' replied Miss Walton. 'He blessed his teaching to the heart of Joseph, and gave him grace to repent. But what I now want to say to you, boys, is this. Joseph *had* time given him to repent, but are you sure that each one of you will have the same?'

'No, ma'am,' answered several.

Miss W. And do you know how soon you may be called?

Charley. No, ma'am; poor little Robert Ainger was run over and killed quite suddenly the other day.

Miss W. So it may be with any of you; and you must think whether you are walking in the path of the disobedient, or in the wisdom of the just. Who will be found among the acceptable people of God?

All. Only the just.

Miss W. And will all be judged?

Edward. Yes; both the quick and dead.

Miss W. You, Samuel, may read the account that is given us of that awful day in Rev. xx., 11-15.

Samuel. 'And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.....And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire.'

Miss W. These are very awful words, and I want you each to remember that they describe what *you* will have to go through; and, take heed boys, that you are walking in the path of wisdom, which will alone save you in that day, through your Saviour, Jesus Christ. What does Solomon say in praise of wisdom?

George. 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' (Prov., iii. 17.)

Miss W. And who gives wisdom?

Edw. 'The Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.' (Prov. ii. 6.)

Miss W. Yes, boys, you must seek of Him this wisdom; then shall you 'understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.' You will learn that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and at the last day you will be found among the acceptable people of God.

The boys had entered Miss Walton's room thoughtfully and quietly, and now they left it even more so, for some of them were touched by her solemn words. Mr Walton had come up from school to fetch his sister down to Church, and now the boys, arranging themselves two and two, walked down behind them, and quietly took their places in Church in front of Mr Walton.

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Fourth Sunday in Advent.

COLLECT.

O Lord, raise up (we pray Thee), Thy power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, Thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of Thy Son our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end.
Amen.

PART I.

ONE day in the last week of Advent, Francis Light was standing idling at the corner of the street, when Jim Elford, and Ned Mason, one of Alfred's elder brothers, came along the road.

'Come with us, Francis,' they called out, as they approached him, 'we are going to play at skittles in the Red Lion ground.'

'No,' answered Francis, 'I don't think I can to-day.'

'Nonsense,' replied Ned, 'do come, like a good fellow, as you always are; we want to make up a party.'

Francis wavered, and asked, 'Who else is going?'

'Oh, several capital fellows,' they answered; 'Will Beecher, and Tom Kingly, and some from town, so come along and join us.'

Now Francis's conscience told him to say 'No;'

as he knew that Mr Walton wished none of the boys to keep company with these idle young men ; for both Jim and Ned, and the friends they had mentioned, were idle, unprincipled youths, seldom or never to be seen at Church, but very often in the public-house (the Red Lion of which they had spoken), or standing idly at the street corner, laughing at or insulting the passers-by. Besides that, Francis remembered that both he and the other boys had been forbidden by Mr Walton ever to go into an ale-house, unless they were obliged ; and he knew that in about an hour's time he ought to go to Mr Walton for a music-lesson. But instead of attending to his conscience, and leaving his tempters, he thought within himself, 'I need not go into the inn, though I join the game, and I can leave in time for the singing-lesson ; besides, I should like the game *so much*.'

Ned and Jim saw that he wavered, and therefore continued to press him.

'Now, why can't you come, Francis?' they said ; 'you are always good-natured ; don't be stupid now.'

'But,' said Francis, 'I have to go to Mr Walton in an hour.'

'Never mind that,' they replied, 'you can leave whenever you like ; only come along now.'

Francis having stood so long to parley, now yielded, and, acting against his better mind, accompanied them. He felt uncomfortable, it is true, but still had not the courage to do what he knew was right. Alas ! Francis, why did you listen to temptation ? why were you not bold in the path of duty ? You knew your own weakness (for Miss Walton had often warned you) ; how easily all good resolutions were forgotten, how easily you were overcome by evil ; why did you not therefore turn away at once, and bravely refuse to go, instead of talking *to your tempters* till your desire to accompany them

was so strong, your fear of appearing ill-natured so great, that your better will was completely overcome?

Before you hear the end of Francis's false steps, I will tell you something about him. He was at this time nearly fourteen years old; he had been in the Forley Sunday-school a year or more; and was, on the whole, a good boy, with quick affectionate feelings, but unsteady of purpose, and easily led wrong by evil companions. It was the knowledge of this that had often made both Miss Walton and her brother warn him, especially of the danger of bad company; and then he would promise well, and really intend at the time to keep out of temptation, and for a little while, perhaps, he would; and then an unexpected temptation like the present would assail him, and he would waver and waver, and too often yield. The poor boy had a most unhappy home; both his father and mother were living; but his father, who was a pedlar, ill-used both wife and children; and his mother wholly neglected her religious duties, and was far from paying proper attention to her family, consisting of Francis and two girls younger than himself. Francis had no regular work; sometimes he would go about the country with his father, and at other times he was left to idle his days at home, or find work for himself in the village, while the want of comfort at home often led him to seek amusement, either in the street or at the houses of his neighbours. At times Mr Walton gave him employment to keep him from harm, and then Francis would generally go on well, for he was out of the way of temptation: he really loved Mr Walton and his sister, and the fear of paining them sometimes influenced him for good. If we look a little closer into his daily life, I think we shall discover *why* he was unstable. He was not *steadily* attentive to his prayers. Unlike Alfred and some of

the other boys, he often forgot to say a mid-day prayer, which he had willingly undertaken to do, and sometimes his morning prayers would be hurried over, and his evening ones said lazily. When this was the case he was easily overcome by temptation, and was unsteady in his purposes to do right. On the other hand, when he was careful over his devotions, he was careful in his actions, and watchful over himself. There were times when he would take great pains with his prayers, rising early and repairing to a lonely barn in a field not far from his home, and there read his Bible and kneel in prayer, because he could not be quiet and alone at his own home; and he would be regular at Church, and strive to join heartily in the services there. When he did this, his daily life was steady and thoughtful. Alas! that he ever should grow weary of well-doing!

Francis having no work to do, had betaken himself to the street corner for amusement, when he was greeted in the way you have been told, by Jim Elford and Ned Mason, and was tempted to join them. They proceeded together to the Red Lion ground, laughing and joking as they went along. But, in spite of this, Francis's mind was for some time not at all easy. It was not until the game had fairly begun that he forgot his scruples; then, however, he became as eager and merry as any of them. True, the first oath he heard shocked him for a moment, and brought to his mind Mr Walton's dislike to the companions he had chosen, but he put the thought quickly from him, and again joined the loud laugh.

Before he conceived it possible, the clock struck the hour appointed for the singing lesson, and throwing down the ball, he said in a discontented tone, 'Now I must go.' But in an instant he was assailed on all sides with entreaties that he would remain. '*Never mind the singing,*' they said. '*Perhaps Mr*

Walton will never miss you, or if he does, he'll not know what kept you away.'

'Oh! but he will miss me,' replied Francis, 'for Miss Walton sent word to me to come.'

'And are you afraid of Miss Walton scolding you?' they all cried out with a scornful laugh: 'well, I would not be such a child as to be afraid of her!' And then seeing that Francis looked angry, Ned changed his scornful tone into a friendly one, and continued, 'Don't be a child, Francis, never mind Mr and Miss Walton; have your game out, and tell them you could not be at the singing-lesson. I should be ashamed of being afraid of them.'

Francis still felt angry, for he did not like to be told he was afraid of them, when he knew that he was not, in the way they meant. He knew that he ought to be *afraid* of doing wrong, yet the dread of being laughed at, and thought a child, overcame his sense of right; for he had weakened his powers of resistance by giving way at first; so answering in a tone of vexation, 'I'm not afraid,' he consented to stay.

It is sad to trace how he was now led on from one fault to another, for he had grown reckless, and *would* not stop to think. The game continued for an hour or two; then, being hot and weary, Jim proposed that they should go into the house and get something to drink, and Francis went with them. There they sat as the hours flew by, spending their time in singing songs and foolish jesting, and still Francis was there; at length, when the party broke up at nine o'clock, and he started on his way home, his head was so muddled he could scarcely walk, and on at last reaching his house, he went up stairs, and throwing himself upon his bed, he slept a dull heavy sleep, without one clear thought, one word of prayer.

We will now pass on to the following Sunday, when the boys were assembled as usual for their

lesson, and Francis with them. Miss Walton did not then know of his fault, and although he felt and looked unhappy, she did not particularly observe him. The Collect for the fourth Sunday in Advent having been said by all the boys, and Miss Walton having explained to them that the three little words, 'we pray thee,' were what is called a *parenthesis*, that is to say, the Collect might be read without the words, and would still be sense, she asked: 'What do we pray God to raise up?'

Samuel. His 'power.'

Miss W. When we ask God to raise up His power, it implies that He is, as it were, allowing it to rest. Do you remember how David prays to God to *stir up His strength*?

'Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses, *stir up Thy strength* and come and help us,' said George. (Psalm lxxx. 2.)

Miss W. 'Stir up' means much the same as—?

'Raise up,' said Edward.

Miss W. Can you remember any instance of God being called upon to *arise*?

David. 'Arise, O Lord God, and lift up Thine hand.' (Psalm x. 13.)

Frederic. 'Let God *arise*, and let His enemies be scattered.' (Psalm lxviii. 1.)

'And,' continued George, 'David says, "So the Lord *awaked* as one out of sleep."' (Psalm lxxviii. 66.)

Miss W. That will do now. You may, if you like, try to find some more texts by the afternoon. All these verses seem to teach us that God and His power, as it were, rest, and therefore we pray Him to—?

"'Raise up His power and come among us, and with great might succour us,'" repeated James.

Miss W. What do you mean by 'succour'?

Henry. Help.

Miss W. When do we need 'succour'?

Francis. When we are in any difficulty or distress.

Miss W. And as we are in difficulties, we pray God to succour us by—?

Andrew. His power.

Miss W. If He is powerful, how will He succour us?

Edward. With great might.

Miss W. Tell me, before we inquire what are our difficulties, why we ask God to come among us? Is He not always among us?

Edgar. Yes, He is everywhere.

Miss W. That is right. But here we ask Him especially to come among us in His—what?

'In His power,' said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes; sometimes He will come among us in love, sometimes in power, sometimes in anger. How did He show Himself to David, when as a boy, he kept his father's sheep?

Several. In love.

Miss W. And to Daniel, in the lion's den?

'In power,' they replied.

Miss W. And to Pharaoh?

All. In anger.

Miss W. Now, we pray for succour; what makes our difficulty?

Edward. Our sins and wickedness.

Miss W. Yes, by them the Collect says, we are—?

'Sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us,' said several.

Miss W. Then, what do we pray?

Edward. That God's bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us.

Miss W. 'Help and deliver' mean the same as 'succour.' Now we will go back to 'sins and wickedness.' Is this world good or evil?

Charley. Evil.

Miss W. When God first made it, was it evil?

George. No; 'God saw everything that He made, and behold it was very good.' (Gen. i. 31).

Miss W. What, then, made it evil?

Edward. The sin of man.

Miss W. What did God say of the ground after Adam's sin?

Fred. 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.' (Gen. iii. 17-18).

Miss W. St. John also says, 'The whole world lieth in wickedness.' (1 John, v. 19). Then, when we say, 'by our *sins and wickedness*,' do we mean only our own individual sins?

Edward. No; the sins of the whole world.

Miss W. Now I will ask you, do we mean *only* the sins of the whole world?

'No, our own sins too,' said Francis; and while he answered, Miss Walton noticed that he blushed deeply. She did not say anything, but continued—

'Yes, we are "sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us," by our own grievous individual sins, as well as by the wickedness of others—all the accumulation of guilt which has defiled the whole world. We are "*let*," (that is, stopped in our race) by our own sins, "*hindered*" by the wickedness of others. In what do you say we are let and hindered?

Samuel. In running the race that is set before us.

Miss W. What race have we to run?

'From earth to heaven,' said George.

Miss W. Who has set this race before us?

All. Almighty God.

Miss W. When did we begin our race?

Several. At Holy Baptism.

Miss W. Is our life on earth compared in the *Bible* to a race?

Edward. Yes; 'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? . . . And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.' (1 Cor. ix. 24-25).

'“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us *run* with patience the *race* that is set before us,”’ said George. (Heb. xii. 1).

Miss W. Yes. In ancient times races were a very common amusement, and great pleasure was taken in them. Among the Grecians there were some celebrated games called the Olympic Games, and there was then a great deal of racing both on foot and in chariots.

'Please, ma'am, what is a chariot?' asked Fred.

'It is a carriage holding two people sitting facing the horse, and a stool in front,' answered Miss Walton. 'Chariots were used in battle, with scythes fastened to the axles. Also, a conqueror would return in triumph from battle in a chariot, and, as I tell you, they were used in racing. But what sort of a race is our life compared to?'

Charley. A race on foot.

Miss W. In the verse Edward quoted, what does it say people run races for?

Francis. A crown.

Miss W. Yes; sometimes only a crown of laurel, and the successful runner would walk in triumph, wearing the crown.

'What is meant by a corruptible crown?' asked Alfred.

'You shall answer that yourself,' Miss Walton replied. 'What would become of the crown of laurel? Would it last for ever?'

Alfred. No, ma'am, it would fade and die. Is that *what corruptible* means?

Miss W. Yes, Alfred, a corruptible crown is one subject to corruption, or that will fade and die away. Surely any earthly crown is corruptible, even one of gold and diamonds. What will become of all precious things when the world will be destroyed?

‘They will also be destroyed,’ answered several.

Miss W. Yes. St. James says, ‘Your riches are corrupted; . . . your gold and silver is cankered.’ (St. James, v. 2, 3). Every thing in this world is subject to corruption; but what crown is held out for the reward of ‘our race?’

Edward. An incorruptible crown.

Miss W. Well, now we must go back to the Collect; we seem almost to have forgotten it. We will see how, by our sins, we are ‘let’ in our race. Supposing a man about to run a race were to put on a loose cloak, could he run?

‘No, ma’am, he would fall down,’ said Charley, smiling at the idea. ‘We don’t like to run even in our smocks.’

Miss Walton answered, ‘No, I know you don’t. Well, now, supposing he were to take a great weight into his hands, could he run then?’

Several. No, ma’am, not for long.

Miss W. Once more. If he were to eat and drink a great deal just before starting, would he then be able to run well?

All. No, ma’am.

Miss W. All these things would be a ‘let’ to him in running the race set before him. So we shall find it is with our sins. Are we the same after we have sinned as before?

Alfred. No, ma’am; you say the white robe of our baptism is spotted by every sin.

Miss W. To have the sin pardoned, what must you do?

Edward. Repent of it.

Miss W. And while you are sinning and repenting, are you making progress in the race?

‘No, ma’am,’ almost whispered Francis.

‘No,’ said Miss Walton. ‘When temptation comes before you, and you yield, you have stopped in your race; nay, even gone back, and your repentance is but a retracing of your backward steps; but if you overcome, you have made a great stride in advance, because every time you overcome, you are stronger, and every time you yield, you are weaker. You shall now give me some examples. Supposing you knew that somebody had spoken evil of you, or done anything to annoy you, how would you feel towards that person?’

‘We should be angry with him,’ answered several.

Miss W. And would it be only for a moment that you would be angry?

‘No,’ said Edward, ‘I dare say we should be angry for a long time.’

Miss W. Indeed, I am afraid you would, for it is too much the way in this place. You must judge for yourselves whether it is so among you, boys. You would, I fear, go on feeling angry, and perhaps not speak for days. Would it not be so?

‘I think it would,’ said Charley; ‘I have known many people who have done so; there is—

Miss W. Well, Charley, don’t think of others now, but of yourself. I say you would, I fear, indulge angry feelings, and not think you were doing wrong. You fancy the anger *just*, because you have been unkindly or untruly spoken of, and yet this indulged anger is a sin upon you, and you are by it grievously ‘let’ in running the race set before you. You would be like the man—?

‘Who tried to run with a cloak on,’ said Charley.

Miss W. And would it be likely that such a man would win the race?

All. No.

Miss W. What would be his only right course?

Edward. To throw away his cloak.

Miss W. Exactly so. In like manner we must throw away all feelings of anger, forgiving those that have spoken evil of us, and *never* allowing ourselves not to be on speaking terms with any one, because they have vexed us.

Alfred. 'Please, ma'am, sometimes people will not speak to us.'

Miss W. If that is the case, Alfred, your duty is still plain. You must speak; and again and again you must speak; and if they continue hardened, the fault lies with them, not with you. Now for another example. If any of you tell a lie, or take anything that does not belong to you, or disobey those who have the rule over you, or any like fault, though your fault is unknown, are you happy?

'No, ma'am, that we are not,' answered Andrew, while Francis turned his face quite away.

Again Miss Walton noticed it, and felt sure something was amiss, and therefore watched him more closely, while she asked, 'Is it only the actual fault that makes you unhappy?'

'No, ma'am,' answered Alfred, 'it is also because we have not confessed it.'

Miss W. Just so; and that is like a man—?

'Running with a weight in his hand,' said Fred.

Miss W. And what, Edward, does St. Paul tell us to do with every weight?

Edward. 'To lay it aside.'

Miss W. And how are we to lay aside the weight of an unconfessed sin?

'By confessing it at once,' replied Charley, with great decision.

Miss W. Indeed, boys, that is the best and happiest way, even though it bring punishment. An unconfessed sin will weigh you down until you will *give up your race* altogether.

During all this time poor Francis had never looked up, his face was dyed a deep crimson, and he felt miserable. He wondered whether Miss Walton knew. He thought she must, but he was mistaken. She did not know; she only suspected there was something amiss, and was determined to speak to him the first opportunity, but not now, before all the boys; so she went on to say, 'Now for the last example of the way in which our own sins are a 'let' to us in our race. In what other way besides the cloak and the weight, did you say a man, by his own choice, would be stopped in his race?'

All. If he ate and drank too much.

Miss W. Now, mention some sins of the flesh which stop us in 'our race?'

'Laziness,' said Edward, and at the same time he glanced at Alfred, who was rather inclined to be lazy over his work. The look brought the blush to his cheeks, but he said nothing.

'We will call it sloth,' said Miss Walton, 'and you will only have time now to give me one instance of sloth hindering you in your race. When you have to go to work early, and are very sleepy, what are you inclined to do?'

Fred. To lie in bed to the last minute.

Miss W. And then, when you *do* get up, you are in a hurry, and perhaps miss your prayers. Can you then run your race rightly?

'No,' said Alfred.

Miss W. Then what must you do?

Edward. Get up in time to say our prayers, though we are sleepy.

Miss W. Yes; and the same may be said about your evening prayers. You must try to give a few thoughtful moments to prayer, and not hurry into bed. You have learned now that indulged sloth, or sins unconfessed, or ill feelings allowed, are all a 'let' to us—?

‘In running the race set before us,’ answered all the boys.

Miss W. The same may be said of any kind of wilful sin. But now, boys, it is Church time, we must leave the remainder of the Collect until the afternoon.

‘Please, ma’am, when are we to come to you? Do let us come to your house,’ said merry little Alfred.

Miss W. I cannot have you at my house to-day, but perhaps on Christmas-Day. Meet me at the school-room at half-past three this afternoon.

PART II.

As Miss Walton was following the children down to Church, she was stopped by Mrs Light, who began, in a complaining tone, to tell her all about Francis’s late misconduct; for although she was a careless woman herself, she did not like her boy to do wrong. Miss Walton listened with great pain, and then inquired whether he had appeared sorry for what he had done.

Mrs Light replied that he had never been like himself since, but had not spoken to her about it.

When Mr Walton joined his sister, she told him the particulars, and asked what she was to do.

‘Talk to him,’ replied Mr Walton, ‘and if he will confess all to you, send him to me, for I must punish him; and I would rather do it when he is penitent, than when he is hardened. It is more likely to do him good.’

Accordingly, as Francis was going into Church, Miss Walton called him, and bade him come to her after service was over.

‘Yes, ma’am,’ he replied, touching his hat; and *then, as he left her, he thought, ‘what can she want*

me for? She must know all about it. At all events I *will* tell her, for I can't bear to look at her now.'

Miss Walton had not been home more than five minutes when she was told Francis wanted her. She immediately called him into a private room, and, sitting down, asked if anything was the matter with him, for he seemed unhappy.

Francis's courage began to fail him, and he stammered out some inaudible reply.

Miss Walton then spoke again, saying, kindly, 'I am sure, Francis, you are not happy, you have something upon your mind. I am afraid you have done something wrong, and you will not be easy until you have confessed it. Where were you on the singing night?' she said, wishing to help him towards confession as much as she could.

'I was playing, ma'am,' he replied.

'Where were you playing, Francis?' she asked. 'Now, answer me honestly.'

With less hesitation in his manner, he answered, 'I was playing at skittles in the Red Lion Ground.'

Miss Walton then waited to see whether he would go on unquestioned, but finding he did not, she said, 'Do you wish, Francis, to tell me all, or would you rather I should leave you with this half confession?'

'Oh, no, ma'am, don't leave me,' he quickly answered; and then, with some hesitation and much grief, he told her *every thing*. She listened quietly, and then said, 'This is indeed a sad tale, Francis. Have you thought much about your fault since?'

'Oh, ma'am,' he said, 'I have been very unhappy ever since, and I thought all you said this morning was meant for me.'

'No, Francis,' she replied, 'not for you in particular. I did not know anything about your fault till your mother told me as I was going down to Church. But now I want you to think over your conduct; see if you can tell me where your fault began?'

He thought a moment, and asked, 'Was it standing idle at the street corner?'

Miss Walton replied, 'Yes, I think it was, and then, when the temptation was put before you, instead of turning away from your tempters, you stood and talked with them, until they argued you into going with them. Francis, you never *can* do steadily right while you will keep bad company.'

With some difficulty he answered, 'I did not intend to do so much wrong when I went with them. *I thought to leave* in time for singing.'

'I dare say you did,' returned Miss Walton; 'but your will is weak, and the only hope you have of being able to run the race set before you, is, by avoiding temptation as much as you possibly can, with earnest prayer to God for help and deliverance. Ask Him by His grace to help you to purpose well, and to keep your resolutions, and ask Him to deliver you when the temptation unavoidably comes before you. And now, Francis, you know you must be punished.'

Francis. Yes, ma'am, I know I must.

Miss W. Don't you think you deserve it?

'Yes, ma'am,' again he answered, 'I know I do.'

Miss W. And will you bear it humbly, and let it be a help to remind you when you are next tempted by bad companions, to turn away? You know Mr Walton never punishes you except for your own good.

'No, ma'am, I know he doesn't; I know that it hurts *he*, as much as it does *we*.'*

At that moment Mr Walton entered the room and spoke kindly, but strongly, to Francis of the greatness of his sin, and showed him how he had gone on from one fault to another, although the first seemed trifling; and then bidding him hold out his

* The writer has heard this very expression more than once from ~~boys~~ *under punishment*.

hand, he caned him severely, as he always did when he thought it necessary to cane at all; 'for,' said he, 'it is greater kindness to give a boy once something he will remember than constantly to be using the cane slightly.' Francis bore the pain humbly, but bravely, without a tear, for though a coward in doing right, he was no coward in bearing pain; and when, in a few minutes, Mr and Miss Walton assured him of their forgiveness, he cheered up and looked happy again.

When the boys were once more assembled for their afternoon lesson, Francis having, by confession, thrown away the weight which had oppressed him in the morning, was again light-hearted, and answered the questions with more attention and thought than usual.

'We will go on with the Collect,' said Miss Walton, 'where we left off in the morning. You had shown how our own sins were a "let" to us in our race; but now tell me, how does the wickedness of the world hinder us?'

Francis. By its evil example.

Miss W. Yes, and that in two ways; by the evil influence of wickedness around us, and also by wicked people directly tempting us to sin. But need we follow the bad example of others?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. Yet it is a hindrance in our way, like a stone lying in the path of a runner; but need a stone necessarily throw down or stop a person in a race?

Edward. No, not if he is looking out and turns aside in time.

Miss W. Just so, and to avoid being led into sin by others we must be watchful, and then we shall be prepared to resist. Now, supposing a runner should see some beautiful fruit hanging within his reach as he went along, would that be a hindrance?

Francis. If he stopped to pluck it.

Miss W. Need he stop?

Francis. No, but if he did, he would be hindered.

Miss W. It is the same when people tempt you to pleasant sins. If you will not listen, you are not hindered, but if you listen to the temptation, you are almost sure to be led on and be—?

‘Tempted and hindered in our race,’ said Francis.

Miss W. I need not give you any particular examples of this. You all know full well in how many ways evil companions tempt you to sin, and you know that you must turn away from them if you hope to proceed in your race without ‘let and hindrance.’ And now, boys, having confessed that by our sins and wickedness we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, what do we pray God to do?

Edward. ‘Of his bountiful grace and mercy speedily to help and deliver us.’

Miss W. Very well; we are so weak that we can do nothing of ourselves, but must ever seek for the assistance of God. What do you mean by ‘speedily?’

Samuel. Quickly.

Miss W. Yes, we want help speedily (lest we should give way before it comes), both to enable us to overcome our own sins and to deliver us from—?

‘The wickedness of others,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes, that is right; and this God gives of His—?

All. ‘Bountiful grace and mercy.’

Miss W. ‘Through the satisfaction of His Son, our Lord.’ We will say a few words about satisfaction and then finish our lesson. What does God say about ‘the soul that sinneth?’

George. ‘It shall die.’

Miss W. Yes. How did God proclaim himself to *Moses*?

Francis. 'The Lord keeping mercy for thousands;and that will by no means clear the guilty.' (Exodus, xxxiv. 7.)

Miss W. And do *we* not *justly* deserve punishment?

All. Yes.

Miss W. And does not God always do what is just?

Again they all answered, 'Yes, ma'am.'

Miss W. How then can He be both merciful and just after He has said that He must punish sin? I see you cannot answer this without some help. If His justice is satisfied, then can he be merciful?

Several. Yes, ma'am, if He is willing.

Miss W. And who has satisfied His justice?

Edward. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. How?

Francis. By dying on the cross.

Miss W. Instead, then, of our bearing the punishment of our sins, who bore it for us?

All. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. When sin had been punished in the person of Christ, what was satisfied?

Edward. The justice of God.

Miss W. Therefore we can pray Him to have mercy upon us through—?

'The satisfaction of His Son our Lord,' said Henry.

Miss W. Now I think you understand the meaning of this expression as fully as you can, without our spending more time over it than we can allow ourselves this afternoon. Perhaps some other day we may speak about it again. To whom do we ascribe honour and glory at the end of the Collect?

Several. 'God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Yes, boys ; be careful, then, that by your lives, as well as with your mouths, you endeavour to do this, by trying earnestly to run the race God has set before you ; then will He help you abundantly and speedily.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Christmas-Day.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who hast given us Thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin, grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

CHRISTMAS was looked forward to with no small degree of pleasure by the children of Forley, both boys and girls. The first classes came to tea at Mr Walton's house, in parties of about eight at a time, during the Christmas week, and after tea they were allowed some fine games of play, which they really thought a great deal more about than the cake and tea. But as we have to do with the boys, and not the girls, we must even confine ourselves to them, although girls are not to be despised, especially those of Forley; and I dare say their doings and their lessons, if they were written down, would excite as much interest as those of the boys, only *we* have not to do with them, and will therefore betake ourselves to our boys.

Early, early on the day before Christmas, Andrew North, George Hickley, Charley Coote, and Francis Light, started off to seek for holly, because there was none to be had near Forley, at all events, none that the boys valued, for they did not call it holly at all unless it was covered thickly with berries. One

year they came to Miss Walton with very doleful faces, saying there was scarcely a bit of holly; and when she laughed, and said, 'What do you mean, boys, when you have now bundles upon your backs, which are almost breaking you down?' they replied, 'Oh, ma'am, we don't call that holly; there are no berries upon it.'

Well, as I tell you, these four boys, none of whom happened to have any work, started off for Brechly Common, where there grew plenty of holly, which any one might have for fetching. They had about five miles to go, but they cared not for this; in fact, the walk constituted half the pleasure. True, the morning was very cold, but then it was fine—a clear, bright frost, and therefore they heeded not the cold, but walked gaily along, every now and then starting off into a run, to keep their fingers and toes warm, singing—

'Merrily, merrily, off and away!
Let us be gone by peep of day:
With red-berried holly and pale misletoe,
We'll soon return laden, hollo! hollo!'

And then Charley, running up to Francis, would hold out his fist, saying—

'There stands a fist:
Who set it there?
A better man than you,
Touch it if you dare!'

and be gone again in a moment, while Francis would give him chase.

At length, being fairly out of breath with running and jumping, they sobered down into a walk, and amused themselves by talking.

In due time they reached the common, and began cutting vigorously at the bushes, when suddenly Charley called out, 'I say, we've brought no cord to *tie up the bundles*. There's a fix for us!'

‘Haven’t we, though?’ replied Andrew, ‘but *I* have.’

It was, however, soon found out that *only* Andrew had remembered, and now, what was to be done.

‘Never mind,’ cried Charley, performing sundry antics as he spoke, ‘*I* know what we can do.’

‘Well, what?’ asked Andrew, who was not famous for a ready invention. Charley stood for some time laughing at Andrew’s puzzled face, and then said, ‘Look about you, and see if you can’t find out.’

‘I see,’ said George, ‘we will tie them with twisted “*withy* wands.”’

‘Just so, Georgy boy,’ cried Charley; ‘and now let us stop talking and go to our work again.’

You must know, reader, that although this was called ‘*Brechly Common*,’ there grew, besides holly bushes, here and there a solitary pollard-willow tree, and with the twigs of these Charley proposed to tie up the holly they wanted. In a short time they had each cut as much as they could well carry, and Francis proposed that they should find some place where they could eat their breakfasts, consisting of a large slice of bread, which they had each brought with them. After a little seeking, they found a hollow, with furze bushes round the sides, and there, cold as it was, they seated themselves, and ate their breakfasts.

‘I know where there is some fine mistletoe,’ said George, ‘shall we go and get it on our way home?’

‘I know where it is, too,’ answered Charley. ‘We can leave the holly in a field at the top of the lane while we go for it. It won’t be much out of our way.’

‘But can we carry any thing more?’ interposed Andrew.

‘Carry! of course we can!’ shouted Francis, as he started up on his feet again. ‘Now that I’ve had my breakfast I can carry any thing.’

‘Well, then, let us be going,’ said Charley, ‘and then we shall be the first to take Mr Walton any holly.’

Having said this, they all started to their feet, shouting ‘hip, hip, hurrah!’ as they went back to the holly bundles. When once these were fixed on their backs, they found it more convenient to walk, and therefore trudged soberly on.

And now we must transport ourselves into a room in Mr Walton’s house, about four o’clock in the afternoon of the same day. There were assembled Mr and Miss Walton, and about a dozen boys and girls; our four friends of the morning, and Alfred, were all the boys, the rest were ‘maidens.’ We only need know the names of two or three of them. Ruth Lunn, a black-eyed little girl, sister to James Lunn, and Margaret and Emily Freeward, two great friends and near neighbours of Alfred’s. Emily, the younger, was perhaps the greater favourite, though Margaret was fond of teasing him, and he never failed to return it with the utmost good humour.

Now, perhaps, some of my readers may object, and say, ‘I thought we were to have nothing to do with the girls.’ Neither shall we have usually; but when we all meet together, it is pleasant to know the names of our companions, and therefore we will be friendly with them for a little while. The Forley boys enjoyed meeting the ‘maidens’ sometimes at Mr Walton’s house, and I see no reason why we should not also.

Among this large party there were none idle, or none thought themselves so. Little Ruth was holding short lengths of string for Mr Walton, and Charley was doing the same for Miss Walton. Then others were pulling the holly into small pieces, and again others were supplying Mr and Miss Walton *with* these pieces. Alfred took particular delight in

bringing all the choice little branches with berries on to Miss Walton, who was busily engaged in making some crowns and triangles to hang about the Church. Mr Walton was forming a beautiful cross of holly to be suspended from the centre of a festoon which stretched across the chancel arch.

The children were all very merry, for on such occasions as these Mr and Miss Walton liked to see them quite at their ease, and encouraged them to talk to each other and to them.

‘Oh ! I’ve pricked myself,’ cried Alfred, looking towards Emily for sympathy.

‘Poor fellow !’ she said, while Margaret, with a mischievous face, whispered to him, ‘Shall we send for the doctor ?’

‘No, thank you, *Miss Freeward*,’ he replied, laughingly, ‘we will wait for that till *you* are pricked.’

‘What is that, Alfred ?’ said Mr Walton ; ‘have you fallen into a holly bush ? Do as the man of Thessaly did.’

‘Please, sir, what *did* he do ?’ asked several merry voices ; ‘do tell us, sir.’

‘Well, then, now listen,’ said Mr Walton, assuming a tone of importance, ‘and mind you always take the same way of curing yourselves :—

“There was a man of Thessaly,
And he was wondrous wise,
He jumped into a gooseberry bush,
And scratched out both his eyes ;
And when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main,
He jumped into another hedge,
And scratched them in again.”

The children laughed heartily over this, and Alfred cried out, ‘Not into a gooseberry bush, into a holly bush,’ and then immediately, apparently regardless of scratches, he ran in among the holly, repeating—

‘He jumped into another hedge,
And scratched them in again,’

at the same time carefully holding his hands above the reach of danger.

By six o'clock, every thing being finished which could be done at Mr Walton's house, all the children dispersed to get their teas, except Margaret and Emily Freeward, who remained behind to clear away the rubbish.

At seven o'clock, the hour for service, a quiet little band of worshippers met in Church, and these very children, who had been so merry but an hour before, now entered the Church with serious, but still happy faces; there were also other children with them, and some young men, teachers in the Sunday-school, who were going to assist in putting up the green.

The service being ended, Mr Walton sent home the younger children, but allowed the elder ones to remain to help to ornament the Church. They were soon all as busy as ever, but no longer laughing and joking as they had done in Mr Walton's house. The talking was in a low tone, and they walked instead of running from place to place. Great was the admiration when Mr Walton, Edward, and one or two of the young men, with the help of a ladder, had fixed the suspended cross. It looked very beautiful, and helped to remind the children why Christmas is a time of joy. The crowns and triangles were also hung in their respective places, and large clusters of holly were prettily arranged on the chandeliers in different parts of the building. Mr Walton preferred seeing a good cluster of holly in a few places rather than little pieces all about the Church. George and Andrew were particularly intent upon having the boys' gallery well ornamented, so Mr Walton left it to them, and they succeeded in arranging it quite to his satisfaction.

And now the work was finished, and the children.

taking one last survey of the whole, followed Mr and Miss Walton along the road. Each one as they came to their own homes saying, 'Good night, ma'am, good night, sir,' turned in, so that by the time Mr and Miss Walton reached the end of the village, they were quite alone.

Before it was light next morning, the sweet sound of carol-singing awoke Mr Walton and his sister, and they soon recognized the voices of their own school-children singing the following verses :—

- ' Come listen to the cheerful song
Our youthful voices raise ;
No joy of earth inspires our mirth,
But a theme of heavenly praise.
- ' We little children joyful sing
A goodly Christian lay ;
For a little Child, pure, meek, and mild,
Was born for us to-day.
- ' A joyful band of children stand
Beside your doors to-night ;
And sing a lay for Christmas-Day,
In praise of Heavenly Light.
- ' We sing for joy that He was born,
Who little children blest ;
He who was born on Christmas morn,
Bring us all to His rest.
- ' Let all rejoice in heart and voice,
In Christmas Carol sweet ;
Then for His dear sake our prayer we'll make,
That we all in heaven may meet.'

Sweetly they sounded in the early morning, and though a shade overspread the mind of Miss Walton, when she remembered how often even carol-singing was made an excuse for sin and money-making, yet it passed away in the confidence she felt that the children of Forley would mind Mr Walton's rules, and not go about all night, or take money for their songs of joy. So she listened with pleasure until the last sounds died away.

And oh! what merry faces greeted Mr and M^{rs} Walton that morning, when at ten o'clock the children entered their room. (There was no regular school on Christmas-Day at Forley, but the first classes had begged for a lesson, and Mr and Miss Walton had agreed to allow them to come to their house.)

'A happy Christmas to you all, children,' said both Miss Walton and her brother, as they entered the room.

'Thank you, ma'am, thank you, sir,' they gleefully replied.

'And who was it that awoke us so early this morning with their sweet song?' asked Mr Walton.

'It was I, it was I,' sounded from many voices.

'Was it your first carol this Christmas?' said Miss Walton.

'Yes, ma'am, we all agreed to come to your house first,' replied bright-eyed little Ruth.

'If you are not quite tired of singing, we will now have a Christmas hymn,' said Mr Walton, and he started—

'Hark, the herald angels sing,'

while all the children joined with great earnestness.

When it was finished, Miss Walton said, 'Now, boys, come into the other room; there is time for a short lesson before church.'

With their glee almost beyond their control they followed her, and when they were seated, she said, 'If you can be sober and quiet now, boys, I will begin.'

In a few minutes they were so, and she asked:

'Can any of you tell me why this is called *Christmas-Day*?'

Alfred. Because Jesus Christ was born to-day.

Miss W. No, I did not ask you what happened to-day, but why it is called *Christmas-Day*. What is the first syllable of the word *Christmas*?

Edward. Christ.

Miss W. Very well, and the second?

Several. Mass.

Miss W. Yes, the service of the Holy Communion used to be called 'the Mass' in England, as it is still in other countries, and to-day is called Christ's Mass, or—?

Francis. Christmas.

Miss W. Yes; tell me any other day, the name of which ends in 'mass'?

Fred. Michaelmas or Martinmas.

Miss W. Exactly; on those days we hear and think about St.—?

'Michael and St. Martin,' answered several.

Miss W. But on Christmas-Day of—?

'Jesus Christ,' answered Alfred.

Miss W. Yes; we hear and think of His nativity. What does nativity mean?

George. Birth.

Miss W. And why is His birth such a joyful event?

Charley. Because He came to save us from our sins.

Miss W. What did the angels sing at His birth?

Andrew. 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.' (St. Luke, ii. 14.)

Miss W. Did others rejoice at his birth besides the angels?

Henry. Yes, the shepherds.

Miss W. Fred, read the verse.

Fred. 'And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen.' (St. Luke, ii. 20.)

Miss W. And what did the wise men say when they saw the star which led them to Christ?

David. 'They rejoiced with exceeding great joy.' (St. Matt. ii. 10.)

Miss W. If we could realize fully, boys, what great things Christ, by His death, hath obtained for us, we should more clearly see *why* we are to rejoice at Christmas time. But what sort of a joy must ours be?

Alfred. A holy joy.

Miss W. And how can you sanctify your joys, or make them holy?

Charley. By going to Church, and thinking about Christ.

Miss W. Yes, Charley, that is right. Would there be any real happiness in the world if He had not come?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No; we must have been unhappy, for we should have been under the wrath of God, and had no hope of going to heaven. Then, whom have we to thank for all our joys?

Several. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Yes, boys, and He loves to see you happy; only try to remember *Him* in the midst of your joys, and let no sin mix with them, but let them be so pure, that you like to think He looks down upon you, even in your happiest moments; and sanctify them by earnest worship in His own Holy House. Now let us turn to the Collect. Who do we say has 'given His Son?'

Edward. Almighty God—God the Father.

Miss W. What did He give His Son for?

Francis. 'To take our nature upon Him.'

Miss W. Do we read in the Word of God that He *gave* His Son?

Edward. Yes, 'God so loved the world that He *gave* His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (St. John, iii. 16.)

Miss W. Often also we read that God *sent* Him; look at 1 John, iv. 9 and 14.

James. 'God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. . . . The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.'

Miss W. Now, Rom. viii. 3.

Fred. 'God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.'

Miss W. Whom do you say God sent?

Edward. His only-begotten Son.

Miss W. But when we say God sent and gave His only-begotten Son, do we mean that He did not also come of His own will and freely give Himself for us?

Several. No.

Miss W. Certainly not. What does Christ say by the mouth of David, in Psalms xl. 9-10?

Samuel. 'Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil Thy will, O my God! *I am content to do it; yea, Thy law is within my heart.*'

Miss W. And again, He shows in St. John, x. 17-18, how willingly He gave Himself for us.

Charley. 'I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, *but I lay it down of Myself.* I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.'

Miss W. Can any of you remember another text?

Edward. 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, *offered Himself* without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.' (Heb. ix. 14.)

Miss W. Yes, Edward, that is a good quotation. This, boys, is a great mystery—how God the Son, of whom the creed says, that He is 'equal with the Father,' should yet be in obedience to Him. We must remember that the three persons of the Ever Blessed Trinity work together with one undivided will. That what the Father wills, the Son

wills also, for He says, 'I and My Father are one.' (St. John, x. 30.) But, again, the creed says of the Son, that He is 'equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as'—?

'Touching His Manhood,' continued Edward.

Miss W. As God, He is equal to the Father; as man, He became obedient, that He might fulfil the law. Read what He says Himself, in St. John, viii. 28-29.

Alfred. 'I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him.'

Miss W. Yes, boys, our blessed Saviour, one with the Father, offered Himself, as it were, to be sent by the Father, and subjected Himself to the law for man's sake. But, as I said before, this is a great mystery, and we must think of it, and speak of it, with deep reverence as passing our understanding. To go on now with the Collect.

'You say God gave His "only-begotten Son," to take upon Him—what?'

Francis. Our nature.

Miss W. What nature had He before He took ours upon Him?

Edward. The nature of God.

Miss W. Yes; and then He took *our* nature. How many natures, therefore, has God the Son?

George. Two.

Miss W. They are called His Divine and human nature. What is meant by Divine nature?

Edward. The nature of God.

Miss W. And human nature?

Francis. The nature of man.

Miss W. Which did our blessed Saviour take upon Him?

Alfred. Man's nature.

Miss W. Yes, the Divine nature He always had, because He was God. What do you read of Him, as God, in the gospel for to-day?

George. 'The Word was God.'

Miss W. And who is meant by 'The Word'?

All. God the Son.

Miss W. Do you also read anything of His being made man?

Fred. Yes. 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.'

Miss W. From whom did He take His human nature? Of whom do you say He was born?

Andrew. Of the Virgin Mary.

Miss W. Then, from whom did He take His human nature?

Edward. From the Virgin Mary.

Miss W. Tell me some of the prophecies which were written concerning His coming.

George. 'Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.' (Isaiah, vii. 14.)

'Now, Francis, you give me your quotation,' said Miss Walton; for some of the boys had been learning texts in preparation for Christmas.

Francis. 'For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.' (Isaiah, ix. 6-7.)

Charley. 'I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh. There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.' (Num. xxiv. 17.)

Alfred. 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord,

that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth . . . And this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.' (Jeremiah, xxiii. 5-6.)

Miss W. Very well; when were these prophecies fulfilled?

Henry. At our Saviour's birth.

Miss W. And what nature do you say He then took?

Samuel. Human nature.

Miss W. Or, as the Collect says, 'Our nature.' In every point was He made like unto us?

'In every thing, only He was without sin. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin,"' said Edward. (2 Cor., v. 21.)

Miss W. George, can you give me another text, to show that our Saviour was without sin?

George. 'And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.' (1 John, iii. 5.)

Miss W. Very well. He took man's nature upon Him, pure, undefiled by sin. Before man sinned, was *his* nature pure?

Several. Yes.

Miss W. And has it ever been sinless again since the fall?

Several. Only in our Saviour.

Miss W. Yes. He, by taking our nature to Himself, has raised it from its fallen state, and now we may again hope to be restored to the presence of God, *through* and *in* Him. What did man lose by sin?

All. Paradise.

Miss W. And, after his fall, did God talk to him face to face, as He did before?

Edward. Only once that we read of in the Bible.

Miss W. Quite right, Edward. Sin made him unfit for Paradise, unfit for the presence of God. But how is it now? What did Christ come to save us from?

Edgar. Our sins.

Miss W. Yes; and now, *if we will*, we may again gain the glories of Paradise, and be admitted into the presence of God, for Christ has taken upon Him—?

Edward. Our nature.

Miss W. And, by taking it, He has—?

‘Raised it again,’ said Francis.

Miss W. And when did He do all this?

Charley. When He was born as at this time.

Miss W. Once more; what is human nature subject to?

Edward. Death.

Miss W. And when our blessed Saviour took our nature, He also became—?

‘Subject to death,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. And He died, that we might—?

‘Live,’ said George.

‘Therefore, boys,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘we must rejoice; rejoice in Him who came as a little child, pure and good, and who will “save us from our sins,” and make us meet to dwell with Him for ever.’

‘And now we must stop, and leave the rest of the Collect for Sunday. See, Mr Walton and the girls are ready for Church; make haste.’

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Sunday after Christmas-Day.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who hast given us Thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin ; grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit ; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

THE joys of Christmas were not over with Christmas-day among the children at Forley. I told my young readers that the first classes came about eight at a time to Mr Walton's house to tea, and to spend the evening. Let us now join one of the parties of our first-class boys. Edward and Charley, Francis and Alfred, Fred and Andrew, and Benjamin Fulford. Benjamin, or Ben, as he was usually called, was not in the Sunday School, as he was considerably older than any there ; but he came regularly to the evening school, and had taken so much pains, and been so steady and well-behaved, that Mr Walton asked him to join this party of boys as an encouragement to him, and because he was a friend of the elder ones. The remainder of the class, with one or two other boys, met the following evening, but *we* will go with the first party, who were duly assembled at half-past five on St. John's Day.

They all made themselves as tidy as possible, for
No. 6.

such an important occasion, and their clean flesh, and tidy heads of hair, white smocks, and bright faces, made them look a cheerful, happy group, as they sat round the tea-table. They were shy at first, but Mr and Miss Walton talked to them, and at length they forgot their fears and began to talk too. I believe what set them off, was Mr Walton's asking them whether they were so silent because they could not both eat and talk at the same time?

When tea was over, and grace had been sung, some games of play were proposed, and then the oysb found their tongues in good earnest. They played at Blind-man's-buff, and Terza, and many other in-door games, until Church time, when they all followed Mr and Miss Walton down the hill, and joined in the evening prayer. Mr Walton said a few words to the children afterwards about the duty of their Christmas joys, indeed all their joys, being seasoned with holy thoughts and prayer.

After service they returned to Mr Walton's, and he showed them a microscope, which gave unbounded delight.

Alfred was very indignant when one of his own hairs was shown him. 'I am sure,' he said, 'my hair is not so coarse as that, and hasn't a great lump at the bottom; *do* look, Charley.'

Charley looked, and was equally perplexed. 'I should think it *is* coarse,' he said; 'I wonder whether *mine* is the same.' Mr Walton then showed him one of his own, and to his great disgust he found it was rather the coarser of the two. They listened with interest when Mr Walton told them that each hair was hollow like a pipe, and that the *lump*, as they called it, was the root, similar to the root of a plant. Charley declared he would use a hair when he wanted to smoke a pipe!

When the microscope had been fully examined, *they* sang carols, and Fred's sweet voice in the

soprano, and Edward's and Charley's in the alto, made them sound very pretty. All joined, though all could not sing equally well, for their hearts were joyful, and they *could* not be silent. Poor Fred! his sweet voice was ere long to take him away from his home and school-fellows. You shall hear how that happened sometime, but not at present.

Mr Walton had a nephew staying with him this Christmas, and he helped to amuse the boys by showing them some wonderful arts of conjuring. He swallowed pieces of candle! made away with coin! or transferred it from one box to another without any apparent means! The boys were very ingenious in their explanations, but could not hit upon the right one. The only thing they found out was the candle swallowing, which Francis managed by boldly taking a piece himself and putting it into his mouth. He expected something very dreadful, and was not a little surprised to find he was eating a very nice apple, cut into the shape of a candle end, with a piece of burnt almond for the wick. But Francis had the sense to hold his tongue, and pretending it was very nasty, as Mr Bernard Walton had done, kept the others in ignorance, until they too ventured to try for themselves, and then they all declared Mr Bernard's candles were very good.

Thus happily passed away the evening until the clock struck ten, when the boys seated themselves quietly round the room, and Mr and Miss Walton talked to them a little while, to sober down their high spirits. When they were sufficiently cool and thoughtful, they stood up and sang the Evening Hymn, and then kneeling down, Mr Walton read a short prayer, and gave them his blessing; after which they said 'good night,' and went joyfully home.

Why was it, reader, that this was such a happy evening? Do you think there was nothing but the games of play, and funny sights, to make the boys so

merry? *I* think, if we follow one of them to his own home, and see how he ended that evening, we shall find there was something else, hidden from the eye of man, which made them so light-hearted and joyous.

We will follow little Alfred home, and hope that he is a type of the rest; for I believe all who met at Mr Walton's that evening were more or less steadily and earnestly trying to do right. Joyously little Alfred ran along the road, and reaching home, found only his mother up.

'Oh! mother! we've had such fun,' were his first words.

'I am glad you have, my boy,' she answered; 'what have you been doing? I think you are always happy at Mr Walton's.'

'Yes, mother, I *am* always happy there,' said Alfred, and then in an eager manner he told her how the evening had been spent.

When his story was finished, his mother said, 'Now, Alfred, go to bed; it is getting on to eleven o'clock.'

He instantly obeyed, and saying, 'good night, mother,' went softly up stairs, that he might not awake his brothers, who slept in the same room as he did.

The moon shining in at the window was his only light, and sitting down on a little box, he looked at it sailing beautifully among the clouds, and began to think how happy he had been; and then he went on to say to himself: 'Miss Walton told us that if Jesus had not come into this world we should have had no real joys. I wonder how that is.' He felt puzzled for a moment, and then thought again: 'I think I know how it is: when I am naughty I am not happy, because God is angry with me, and if Jesus had not come, He would always have been *angry* with me. Oh! how shocking that would be!

But now,' he went on to think, 'I am His child, and He loves me, and therefore I can be happy.' He dwelt on this thought for an instant or two, and then said, almost aloud, 'I will *always* try to be good;' and then quickly it shot across him, 'I cannot be good without the help of God. I will pray to God to help me.' With this thought he rose gently from the box where he was sitting, and kneeling down, still opposite the window, looking towards the sky, he thought, 'What have I done wrong to-day? Have I done all that I was bid?' He could not remember any act of disobedience, so went on, 'Have I felt or spoken angrily?' and then he remembered that he *had* felt cross for a moment when a different game was chosen to the one he wished for, and he knew that was wrong. He thought again: 'Have I said my prayers carefully?' and immediately his conscience accused him of idle thoughts in Church. Having finished asking himself the few questions Mr Walton had given him, he put his hands together, and with real sorrow confessed, in the words of his accustomed evening prayer, the sins he had remembered, earnestly begging God to make him always good, and having commended himself, and those he loved, to the care of Almighty God, he rose, and quickly undressing himself, laid down peacefully to rest, falling asleep even before he could get through the Psalm he usually said after he was in bed.

And now, reader, we have the secret of his joy. He was at peace with God, and earnest in his endeavours to do right; not without faults, but each day asking and receiving pardon for what he had done wrong, and grace for the future.

We hope the other boys acted as he did, though some even of the party of that evening, I fear, were not quite so thoughtful and earnest as little Alfred.

'And now, boys,' said Miss Walton, on the following Sunday, 'we must go on with the Collect, at

the place where we left off on Christmas-day. How far did we get?

Several. 'Born of a pure Virgin.'

Miss W. Yes, then to-day we have the petition part of the collect. What do we pray?

'That we being regenerate, and made God's children . . . may daily—?'

Several. 'Be renewed by His Holy Spirit.'

Miss W. What does 'to renew' mean?

Edw. To make new.

Miss W. No, rather to make new *again*. In other words beginning with *re* we shall find implied something done *again*. What does *return* mean?

Several. To turn back again.

Miss W. Could you return if you had not gone?

All. No.

Miss W. What does *replace* mean?

Fran. To place back again.

Miss W. Yes, if you have taken a book from a shelf, for instance, and put it back again, then you say you—?

'Replace it,' said Charley.

Miss W. Very well, then 'renew' means—?

Several. To make new again.

Miss W. Have we then once been made new?

Alfred. Yes.

Miss W. When?

All. At holy Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, we say in the Collect that we being—?

'Regenerate and made Thy children by adoption and grace,' continued Samuel.

Miss W. And what does regenerate mean? Here again, you see, we have a word beginning with *re*. Without the *re*, what is the word?

Edw. Generate.

Miss W. Yes, and generate means brought forth or *born*; but here we speak of being *regenerate* or—?

‘*New born,*’ said Alfred.

Miss W. In the Collect then we say we are ‘regenerate,’ or—?

‘Born again,’ said several.

Miss W. And made what?

‘God’s children,’ answered Charley.

Miss W. When was our first birth?

David. When we were born into this world.

Miss W. And then we were by nature—?

‘Children of wrath,’ said Andrew.

Miss W. But in the Collect we say we are children of God: how did we become so?

Edward. By our new birth in holy Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, from being children of wrath, we become children of grace, by our regeneration, or new birth. Do we read anything of this new birth in the Bible?

George. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ (St. John, iii. 3.)

Miss W. And how does our Saviour afterwards explain what he meant by being born again?

Fred. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of *water* and of the *spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ (John, iii. 5.)

Miss W. What is the outward and visible sign, or form in Baptism?

All. ‘Water, wherein the person is baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’

Miss W. But our Saviour says water and *the Spirit*. What is the gift of holy Baptism?

Charley The gift of the Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Yes, for what did St. Peter answer to those who asked, ‘What shall we do?’ Look at Acts, ii. 38.

Samuel. ‘Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remis-

sion of sins, *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*'

Miss W. In the catechism our regeneration is called 'a death unto sin—?'

'And a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace,' continued James.

Miss W. Can we be righteous without the help of the Holy Spirit?

All. No.

Miss W. You say again that you believe in God the Holy Ghost, who—?

'Sanctifieth us and all the elect people of God,' said several.

Miss W. Then at holy Baptism you are regenerate or new born, and receive the gift—?

'Of the Holy Spirit, who sanctifieth us,' continued Edward.

Miss W. What does 'sanctify' mean?

Fran. To make holy.

Miss W. Is our new birth ever called regeneration in the Bible?

Geo. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of *regeneration*, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. (Tit. iii. 5.)

Miss W. Without this new birth could we ever hope for the Kingdom of Heaven?

Edw. No, our Saviour says not: 'Except a man be born again, he *cannot* see the Kingdom of God.'

Miss W. By our new birth then we are made God's children by adoption and grace. What is meant by an *adopted* child, I think I have before explained to you.

Alfred. A child taken by a person and brought up as one of his own.

Miss W. I shall tell you an instance of this. There was once a young, beautiful, but very poor woman and her husband, travelling to seek for employment,

with one little boy of a year old, whom they both loved most tenderly. One morning his mother complained of feeling ill at the inn where they were sleeping. A doctor was immediately sent for, and he pronounced her illness to be a dangerous fever. Her poor husband nursed her night and day, but before a week was out she died. His grief was intense, especially when he thought of his motherless little boy, but his sorrows did not last long, for he had taken the fever from his poor wife, and a very few days after her death he too was gone, and the little babe left among strangers.

The doctor who had attended them was a kind, good man, and he pitied the innocent babe, and as he had only two children living, he was determined to adopt this little one for his own. Before the sick man had died, he had told the doctor how poor they were, and that he had no friends to look to. One brother, as poor as himself, lived in the town of Fleetpool, but he could not afford to take the child. The good doctor immediately wrote to this brother, asking his permission to adopt the boy. It was gladly granted, and the little one was taken home and ever after was treated like one of the doctor's own children, and every care was bestowed upon him. He grew up to manhood, and by his affection and good behaviour in some degree repaid his adopted parents' kindness, and when at last they died in a good old age, he shared the inheritance with the other two children.

'What a pretty story,' said Charley. 'Poor little boy! how glad he must have been.'

Miss W. When he grew older, I have no doubt he was glad, but at the time he was adopted, he was too young to know anything about it. And now tell me, is that like what God does for us?

'Yes, ma'am,' they all answered.

Miss W. We, like that little child, were in misery

and had none to help, but before we knew our wants, God took us of his grace. What does grace mean there?

Edw. Mercy.

Miss W. Yes, God took us of his mercy, and adopted us for his own children—Then we ‘being regenerate and made His children by adoption and grace,’ pray that we may—?

‘Daily be renewed by His Holy Spirit,’ answered Fred.

Miss W. And why do we need renewing? When were we first made new?

‘At our Baptism,’ answered several.

Miss W. Yes, but by our sins we become defiled, therefore we require to be made—?

‘New again,’ said Edward.

Miss W. And how often do we require this renewing?

All. Daily.

Miss W. Yes, daily we must pray to God for fresh gifts of His Holy Spirit, to renew our strength for our daily battles. *Why* do you say we need renewing?

George. Because we sin.

Miss W. Do we sin every day?

Charley. Yes, every day.

Miss W. And by our sins we grieve the Holy Spirit, and drive Him from us. If we go on in sin and do not repent, shall we be renewed day by day?

Alfred. No, God the Holy Spirit will forsake us altogether then.

Miss W. And if He forsake us what will become of us?

‘We shall be lost,’ answered Charley, in a subdued voice.

Miss W. This is an awful thought, boys, and should make us very watchful that we sin not, lest we quench the Spirit of God within us. When should *you* pray for the renewing of God’s Spirit?

All. Every day.

Miss W. How does God, the Holy Spirit, help you when He dwells in you?

Fran. By making us know what is right and wrong, and giving us strength to do right.

Miss W. He speaks to you by your—what?

Edw. Consciences.

Miss W. And this blessed gift, you say, was bestowed on you at your Baptism—for whose sake?

All. For the sake of Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Was He baptized?

George. Yes, by St. John the Baptist.

Miss W. And we say in the Baptism Service, that Jesus Christ, by His Baptism in the river Jordan, did—?

‘Sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin,’ continued Edward.

Miss W. Then we must thank *Him* for all the blessings of our Baptism. He was, at this time, born into the world for us. He took our nature upon Him, and raised it from the depths to which, by sin, it had fallen. He, by his Baptism, instead of being Himself cleansed, sanctified water for the washing away of our sins, and now, through Him, we may pray to the Father for the daily renewing of His Holy Spirit. But, boys, if we do *not* daily seek for this renewing, nor strive to walk by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will our Baptism have done us any good?

Several. No, ma’am.

Miss W. No, as God’s children, every sin we commit is of a deeper dye, for we resist the Spirit which speaks to us, and we act against our better knowledge. If that little boy had grown up wild and wicked, would not all the kindness he had received have made his sin the greater?

All. Yes, indeed, it would.

Miss W. You must all try and remember this, and

strive to be good, obedient children of your Heavenly Father, who loves you for the sake of His blessed Son, and has made you His own; and if you pray unto Him you shall daily be renewed by His Holy Spirit, until you come to His everlasting kingdom.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Circumcision of Christ ;

AND

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who madest Thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man ; grant us the true Circumcision of the Spirit ; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey Thy blessed will ; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE Feast of the Circumcision fell this year on one of the nights of the boys' evening school. The two Norths, and the two Cootes came up the hill together, when Henry called Charley to one side, and said, 'Charley, will you come up to town with me, instead of going to school to-night?'

'What for?' asked Charley ; 'are you obliged to go?'

The attendance at the evening school at Forley was a voluntary act on the part of the boys. Mr and Miss Walton liked to see them constant, and this they knew, and the steady ones therefore seldom stayed away unless they were obliged. In this instance, Charles thought perhaps Henry had some message, and it would be kind to go with him, and therefore he had asked, 'What for?'

Henry answered, 'No, I'm not obliged, but I want to go. I would have asked Andrew to go with me, only he's so stupid, I know he won't; but you will, I'm sure.'

'You must first tell me what you are going for,' said Charley, 'and then I will tell you whether I'll come or not.'

'Well, then,' said Henry, 'there is a show up in town, and I have got sixpence, and I want to go and see it.'

'But I heard your father say to-day you were not to go, Henry; don't you remember?' said Charley.

'Yes, I know he said so,' answered Henry, 'but he'll never know anything about it. He thinks I'm gone to school, so do come with me.'

'Indeed, I won't,' answered Charley, 'and don't you, Henry. Even if your father had not forbidden it, you know Mr Walton doesn't like us boys to go up to town late at night.'

'I don't care for Mr Walton; I want to go, and I will go, and I thought you would have come with me,' said Henry, angrily, 'or I should not have said any thing about it.'

'No, I won't go,' again answered Charley, 'and I wish *you* would not; but you won't listen to what I say, so I must leave you.'

'Go, then,' said Henry, 'and tell your dear Mr Walton that I have gone to see a show, but that you are a good boy and wouldn't go!'

Charley was just about to leave, but being quick-tempered, this taunt roused his anger, and turning quickly round, he was on the very point of striking Henry, when 'you are a good boy,' seemed again to sound in his ear, and he thought, 'not very good, surely, to get into a passion, and fight,' so with a great effort he quickly said, 'I shall not tell any thing about you, Henry, unless I am obliged; you

know *that* very well;' and then, lest any thing in Henry's reply should again rouse his anger, he ran quickly after the other two.

This conversation had been heard by one whom the boys little suspected to be near. Mr Walton, on his way from visiting a sick person, was walking along a foot-path which ran a short way parallel with the road on the other side of the hedge. The boys were so intent on their conversation that they had not heard his footsteps, and it was too dark to see any thing. Mr Walton knew the boys separated, but could not distinguish which way they went. The footpath here left the road and took a short cut, and when Mr Walton reached the point where they again met, he just lit upon the group of boys. He looked to see whether Henry was among them. But no, he had turned up into the town by another pathway across the fields. Mr Walton said nothing then, for he thought perhaps Henry would repent and come back, after all, but walking along with the boys, he entered into conversation with them.

They found a number of the scholars already assembled, and Miss Walton setting them to work, some to writing, some to arithmetic, when they reached the house. The three boys took their places, and Mr Walton began to set them copies. He wrote for Charley, 'Happy are they who courageously do right.' Charley took his book, looked at the copy, then at Mr Walton, but said nothing.

'Andrew, where is your brother?' said Miss Walton.

'Please, ma'am, I don't know; he came up the hill with us, and I didn't know he hadn't come in;' and turning to Charley, he asked, 'You were walking with him; where did you leave him?'

“ Charley looked puzzled, and then answered, ‘I ran forward and left him, before Mr Walton joined us.’

‘And you do not know what became of him?’ said Miss Walton.

Poor Charley! he did not know what to do; so he did what appeared rude;—he turned quickly to Mr Walton, and paying no attention to Miss Walton’s question, asked, ‘Please, Sir, will this do?’ showing him his copy-book.

Miss Walton was just going to ask him whether he had heard her question, when Mr Walton, calling her to one side, whispered, ‘Don’t ask any thing more about it now, I will tell you why another time.’ She accordingly appeared to forget her question, and went and looked over some of the sums, while Mr Walton left the room.

When the reading hour arrived, Miss Walton said, ‘Instead of our usual chapter to-night, boys, you shall read the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel; for the events we commemorate to-day are so intimately connected with our blessed Saviour’s early life, that it is not well they should be passed over without thought. Were any of you at Church this morning?’

Francis and Alfred answered that they were; but the rest had been at work.

‘I noticed many of you there this evening,’ said Miss Walton; ‘but you did not then hear the Epistle and Gospel. Can any of you say the Collect?’

‘Yes, ma’am,’ said Edward, ‘I think I can:’ and standing up he repeated it correctly, as he always did.

The reading being finished, Miss Walton asked, ‘What day is to-day?’

Andrew. New Year’s day.

Miss W. Something else besides New Year’s day. In the *Christian* year what is it?

Alfred. The Feast of the Circumcision.

Miss W. When did the *Christian* year begin ?

Edward. Advent Sunday.

Miss W. Whose circumcision do we commemorate to-day ?

Fran. Our blessed Lord's.

Miss W. To whom was circumcision first commanded ?

George. To Abraham.

Miss W. Let us see under what circumstances. Look at Gen. xvii. 1-2.

Edw. 'The Lord appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God ; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.'

Miss W. Very well, what is a covenant ?

Edw. A promise between two.

Miss W. Yes, when the fulfilment of one promise *depends* upon the fulfilment of the other, then the agreement is called— ?

'A covenant,' said several.

Miss W. And what was the condition of God's covenant with Abraham ?

Fran. 'Walk before me, and be thou perfect.'

Miss W. Yes, and then God says, 'And I will make a covenant between me and thee.' What was Almighty God's part of the covenant ?

George read : 'I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, for an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God.' (Gen. xvii. 6-7.)

Miss W. And what was the token or sign of this covenant ?

Ben. Circumcision.

Miss W. Charley, read the eleventh verse of the same chapter.

‘And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a *token of the covenant* betwixt me and you.’

Miss W. Now supposing Abraham had refused to obey God’s command to circumcise every male, would Almighty God then have kept *His* part of the covenant?

Several. No, ma’am.

Miss W. No, what does God say of the uncircumcised child?

Fred. ‘He shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.’ (Gen. xvii. 14.)

Miss W. And therefore if it was broken on *one* side, it would not be fulfilled on the *other*. We see, then, that part of the condition of the covenant was that every male should be—?

‘Circumcised,’ answered the boys.

Miss W. Yes, circumcision was the outward and visible sign of the covenant, obedience to God’s law was the inward part on man’s side, and those who were circumcised pledged themselves by the very act to obedience; and the mark of circumcision, which continued through life, was a *token* or *sign* that they were in covenant with God. What do you read in the epistle about this?

Edw. ‘And he received the *sign* of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness which he had, yet being uncircumcised.’

Miss W. One thing more. Were the promises of God entirely for things present, or things future?

Fran. Things future.

Miss W. Yes, *hereafter* he was to become a great nation—*hereafter* kings were to come from him; therefore there was the more need for some token of the covenant, as it were, to be a memorial. But when

the covenant was fulfilled, was there any more need of the token or sign ?

All. No.

Miss W. Now tell me why our blessed Saviour was circumcised.

Alfred. That he might be obedient to the law.

Miss W. Yes, and also that He might prove Himself a true son of Abraham after the flesh ; for all who claimed to be the seed of Abraham were circumcised. But there was a third reason. What was shed at circumcision ?

Several. Blood.

Miss W. What did our Saviour come into the world for ?

All. To shed His blood for us.

Miss W. Yes, and He thus early shed His blood as an earnest of the sacrifice of Himself on the cross. But are *Christians* bound to be circumcised ?

All. No.

Miss W. Why not ? When did you say there would be no more need of the sign ?

Edward. When the covenant was fulfilled.

Miss W. Yes, and it was fulfilled when Christ, a King, came of the seed of Abraham to sit on the throne of David, for ever and ever. Where is Christ now ?

Ben. 'Sitting at the right hand of God.'

Miss W. And all who are joined to *Him* become the seed of Abraham ; for again, what does the Epistle say of this ?

Alfred. 'And he received the sign of circumcision ; a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised ; that he might be the *father* of all them that believe ; though they be *not circumcised*.'

Miss W. Yes, all the faithful followers of Jesus Christ are the true seed of Abraham, as St. Paul says : 'If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's

seed.' (Gal. iii. 29.) And when He had come, God made a new covenant, according to His promise by Jeremiah (Jer. xxxi. 32-34). Can you tell me what is the sign of the *new* covenant?

Alfred. Baptism.

Miss W. What has baptism then taken the place of?

Charley. Circumcision.

Miss W. Yes, baptism is the sign and seal of our new covenant with God; but it is something more than that too. What do we receive at baptism?

George. The gift of the Holy Ghost.

Miss W. But are we told that there was any gift at circumcision?

Several. No.

Miss W. Baptism and circumcision are both alike, as being *signs* or tokens of God's covenant with man; but baptism is far higher than circumcision, even as the new covenant is better than the old. Circumcision was merely a sign of—?

'The covenant,' said Edward.

'But holy baptism,' continued Miss Walton, 'is not only a sign, but a *means of imparting strength* to keep the covenant. When was our Saviour taken to be circumcised?'

Ben. When he was eight days old.

Miss W. What name was given to Him?

Charley. Jesus.

Miss W. What does Jesus mean?

Edward. A Saviour.

Miss W. Then to-day our blessed Lord was made known as the Saviour of man; it may well then be a day of joy. How must we always use that name?

George. With reverence. 'At the name of Jesus every knee should bow.' (Phil. ii. 10.)

Miss W. What do we pray for in the Collect?

Francis. The true circumcision of the Spirit.

Miss W. This 'true circumcision' we all need, although the outward ceremony is done away. Now

we must learn in what it consists. How do we go on to pray?

Ben. 'That our hearts and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey' God's 'blessed will.'

Miss W. Then, if our hearts are 'mortified,' we shall have the 'true circumcision of the Spirit.' What does 'mortified' mean?

Edw. Decayed.

Miss W. Yes, or to be dead to; and we pray that our 'hearts and all our members, being mortified,' or dead to—what?

Charley. All worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey God's will.

Miss W. What two things are led away by evil lusts?

Alfred. Both our 'hearts and members.'

Miss W. Yes; and I think we may say the heart is most tempted by worldly lusts, and the members by carnal ones? and, as I think you boys are most tempted by carnal lusts, we will explain them first, and then, if we have time, say a few words about those of the world. What does 'carnal' mean? What do you say your god-parents promised you should renounce, besides the works of the devil, and the vanities of this world?

All. 'The sinful lusts of the flesh.'

Miss W. Yes, and 'lusts of the flesh' mean the same as—?

'Carnal lusts,' said Edward.

Miss W. 'Carnal,' then, means fleshly. We pray that our hearts and members may be mortified, or—?

'Dead to all carnal lusts,' said Ben.

Miss W. What are our members?

Fred. Different parts of the body.

Miss W. Yes, our hands, our eyes, our mouths, are different members of the body. Now do we sin by any of these?

Alfred. Yes, we sin with our mouths when we eat and drink too much.

‘And we sin with our eyes if we look at any thing we ought not,’ said Charley.

Miss W. What sort of thing, Charley.

‘Any sight-seeing we have been told not to,’ he answered. Here Charley was thinking of the show, though Miss Walton did not then know it. It seemed to him that it was the wish to see what was forbidden that had tempted Henry to sin—and he was right. It *was* the lust of the eye which led him on from one sin to another.

Miss Walton answered Charley, ‘Yes, you are right; the wish to please the eye, by sight-seeing, and other ways, often leads to sin. And how do we sin with our hands?’

Alfred. When we take any thing that does not belong to us.

Miss W. Yes, and *sometimes* they sin by being idle. But now, having shown how, by our members, we sin, tell me what generally comes before the act. Before you look at a thing you do—what?

‘Wish to look,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Sometimes the wish comes first, sometimes the look excites the wish. But now you shall tell me how carnal lusts, or wishes of the flesh, make our members sin. And we shall find Eve an example of all. First, Eve wished to eat the fruit—why?

George. Because she saw that it was good for food.

Miss W. Is it the flesh or the spirit that wishes for food?

Several. The flesh.

Miss W. And why was that fleshy desire of Eve’s wrong?

Charley. Because that tree was forbidden.

Miss W. Very well; she had the sinful wish for it; how did her eyes sin?

Alfred. By looking at the tree.

Miss W. And how did her hands sin?

Charley. By taking the fruit.

Miss W. And how did her mouth sin?

Ben. By eating.

Miss W. Yes, and all these members sinned because of a carnal lust. Can you give me another example of a person being led on to commit a deadly sin by a carnal lust. Who sold his birthright?

George. Esau.

Miss W. For what did he sell it?

Fred. A mess of pottage.

Miss W. Yes; the flesh made him lust for the pottage, and his heart sinned in despising and parting with his birthright; but what member also sinned?

‘His mouth in eating,’ said Alfred.

‘And his hands by taking it,’ said Charley.

‘Also, did not his eyes by looking at it?’ asked Edward.

Miss W. You are all right. Give me one more example. Did David fall by a carnal lust? What was his great sin?

George. Taking the wife of Uriah to be his wife.

Miss W. In this instance we shall find the members sinning first. How came he to know any thing about her?

Francis. He saw her bathing.

Miss W. He *saw* her, and then came the carnal lust. Did he withdraw his eyes?

Edward. No, he continued to look, and went on to sin.

Miss W. Now that you have given me these three examples, I want you to tell me how *your* members lead you to carnal lusts, and your lusts lead your members to sin. When you, boys, see fruit hanging on a tree, what does the sight lead you to do?

Charley. To wish for it.

Miss W. Must you continue looking and wishing?

Alfred. No, we must turn away, and then we shall forget it, and not wish any longer.

Miss W. If you go on looking you will wish more and more, and then you will be tempted to—?

‘Take it,’ said Charley, ‘and then our hands will sin.’

Miss W. And what tempts you to the ale-house? Not you younger ones, I trust, but as you grow into young men, what then tempts you there? And as *Miss Walton* spoke, she looked towards Francis, Ben, Edward, and others, who were growing up into young men.

Edward answered, ‘The love of drink.’

Miss W. Indeed, I am afraid it is, and when you indulge this carnal lust, the whole body partakes of the sin, not only a member or two; and God says of the intemperate and the drunkard, that ‘they shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.’ You must, boys, if you would be holy, mortify or kill this carnal lust, by watching against the first inclinations.

‘Sometimes,’ said Francis, with a deep blush, ‘the love of pleasure leads us.’

‘Yes,’ said *Miss Walton*, ‘I believe so; but a forbidden pleasure becomes wrong. A pleasure sought at a wrong place, or in bad company, or at improper times, becomes a sinful lust, to be watched and striven against. But I think we may say that wrong enjoyments, such as improper games (like card-playing for money, or betting of any kind, and pitch-farthing, which you boys used to be so fond of), or reading wicked books, or the enjoyment of bad company, are more *lusts of the world*, which please the heart or mind. And these we must also learn to mortify. But it is getting too late to enter upon this subject. We shall have another opportunity with some other Collect. And now that you have

learnt the meaning of "carnal lusts," tell me, are those who indulge them doing the will of God?

All. No.

Miss W. We therefore pray that we may do—what?

'Mortify them,' said several.

Miss W. Yes, that in all things we may obey—?

'God's blessed will,' they all answered.

Miss W. Very well, boys; while we follow our own 'carnal lusts,' or the lusts of the world, we cannot be pleasing God; therefore you must earnestly pray for help, and heartily strive to mortify them, and endeavour in all things to follow God's holy will. Can you do so without thinking about it?

All. No.

Miss W. Whenever you are tempted to sin, stop and think what God's will is, and follow it, asking help in your thoughts if you cannot say any words at the time, and sometimes deny your wishes, even when they are not wrong, so will you have more power when the temptation comes.

'And now, boys,' continued Miss Walton, 'you must go home.'

They quickly got together their copy-books and slates, and putting back the forms, they took their hats, said 'good night,' and went cheerfully home.

'How glad I am,' thought Charley, as he went along, 'that I did not go with Henry. How strange it is that Miss Walton should have talked to us, as if she had known all about it, and yet I am sure she cannot—but it always is so.'

Charley seemed to forget that it was his answer which had made Miss Walton speak of sight-seeing leading the eye to sin. She had thought from his manner that he had something on his mind at the time he spoke, especially after what Mr Walton had whispered to her, but it was certainly he who had made the subject of the catechising suit his own situation and thoughts. But this was common with Charley.

He was a boy of quick understanding and a thoughtful mind, hidden under a rough and somewhat careless manner. Sometimes when he was with his school-fellows it was merely put-on carelessness. But this manner was entirely laid aside when he could get a quiet talk with Miss Walton, and there was no boy in the class who enjoyed one more than he did, or could be more deeply serious and thoughtful. Miss Walton at times used to feel vexed to see how he would assume among his companions a wild careless air, often, evidently to her, to hide deeper feelings. Yet when Charley was tempted as he had been that evening, he would often, indeed generally, boldly choose the right, so that among the more observant of the boys, Charley was decidedly considered a good boy, while others, like Henry, would fancy he was easily led to do any thing they pleased. Mr Walton used to say he was the best boy in the first class, but Miss Walton, who knew them more intimately, would not quite agree to this, much as she loved little Charley. We will not say who *was* the best boy, for each shall stand upon his own merits with my young readers.

Charley was obliged to keep his thoughts to himself, as he had no one to express them to, for no one knew where Henry was, and even if they had known, I don't think Charley *would* have expressed them, except it had been to Alfred. We shall find that afterwards he did get his longed-for talk with Miss Walton.

But now I dare say you are anxious to know what had become of Henry. On Charley's leaving him, he turned up into town, and before he reached the show, had met with some companions who soon drove out of his mind the uncomfortable thoughts that Charley's words had put into it. The show contained a dwarf and a giant, and much went on *within* its walls which no pure-minded person would

have liked to see or hear. It was the knowledge of this which had made Henry's father forbid him to go. However, Henry regarded not the command, but boldly walked in with his companions. He had intended only to stay a short time, and then go to school, when he first entered, but the hour slipped away, and at length when he remembered it, he found it quite too late to think of going, so his companions proposed that they should get something to drink. Henry unresistingly followed, thinking he should still be home about the same time as the rest of the boys, but just as he reached the door of the show, whom should he encounter but his father, who on Andrew's return without Henry, suspected where he was, and started off to see.

Henry trembled beneath his father's eye, and would if he could have escaped, but his father was too quick for him, and seizing him by the collar, asked what right he had there. Henry doggedly answered that he chose to come.

'You chose to come, did you,' said his father, 'after my order that you should not? you disobedient boy; well, now you are to follow me home.' With these words, he led the trembling but unresisting Henry home, where, taking up a horse-whip, he gave him a severe beating, and sent him without his supper to bed.

But Henry, though crying with pain, was quite hardened and impenitent, and instead of thinking of his own faults, began to wonder what took his father up into town, and how unfortunate it was that he had come. It suddenly struck him that Charley must have told. 'If he has,' he thought, 'he *shall* catch it;' then immediately turning to Andrew, who was already in bed, he accused Charley of telling. Andrew assured him he was quite mistaken, for Charley had never spoken to his father at all, or told any one, not even him, or Miss Walton, when she

had asked him if he knew where Henry was. 'Father,' he said, 'suspected it, and when he saw me come in without you, he set off to look. Oh, Henry! why did you go?'

'It is no business of yours *why* I went,' was the kind reply, and without any more words, he threw himself upon his bed.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Epiphany.

COLLECT.

O God, who by the leading of a star, didst manifest Thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we, which know Thee now by faith, may, after this life, have the fruition of Thy glorious God-head, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE morning after the events narrated in the last chapter, Mr Walton heard how Henry's misconduct had ended, and that his father had punished him. Still Mr Walton wished to see him, to try and bring him to a penitent sense of his faults. He therefore sent word to Henry to come up in the evening and speak to him. But Henry would not come ; he was afraid of meeting the eye of Mr Walton, and for some days kept out of sight, even staying away from school the following Sunday. However, in the evening, he was at Church, and when the service was over Mr Walton called him into the vestry, and spoke earnestly and kindly to him about his fault. He told him he had overheard the conversation which passed between him and Charley, and showed him how grievously he had resisted the right, and, to indulge his own evil wishes, had wilfully gone, contrary to the command of his father.

‘Your father knew what was best for you, did not he, Henry?’ asked Mr Walton.

But Henry for a long time would not answer, until Mr Walton repeated the question, and then he

said, 'I don't know; there was no harm in going; why should he tell me not to go?'

'Oh, Henry,' replied Mr Walton, 'this is not right; whether you can see the reason or not, as long as you are a child, you *must* believe that what your parents command is what is best for you, so long as they command nothing contrary to the will of God. Was that the feeling which made you determine to go?'

'I don't know,' he again answered. 'I wanted to go, and I didn't think there was any harm in it.'

Mr W. 'Do you mean you did not think there was any harm in disobeying your father?'

Henry. No, I mean there was no harm in going.

Mr W. Whether there was any harm in the thing itself or not, you know well, Henry, that it became wrong for you to go, after you were forbidden, otherwise you would not have been afraid of your father knowing. You should have put away the wish from your heart the moment it entered, when the pleasure was a forbidden one, and have forced yourself to believe that what your father willed was best for you. This spirit of independence is most dangerous, Henry, and, if indulged in, will lead you on to rebellion against God. We are all like children, and cannot be independent, for we must submit ourselves to God, and often, like children, we cannot see the reason of His commands and appointments, but we must believe that they are best for us, and submit to them, and far, far happier it is for us when we yield a willing obedience. He has placed children in subjection to their parents and elders, and it is their duty to obey them. This you know, Henry, and that it will be far better for you, both now and hereafter, to submit yourself to them.

Mr Walton then waited to see whether Henry would speak, but finding he did not, he asked, 'Do you not think you did wrong, Henry?'

‘ Still Henry was silent. Mr Walton again said, ‘ You must answer me one way or the other, Henry ; and, oh ! my boy ! be honest, and do not harden yourself against the voice of your conscience. Do you acknowledge that you did wrong ? ’

In a tone of indifference he then answered, ‘ Yes. ’

Mr Walton turned away pained, and then spoke once more. ‘ You say “ Yes ” with your mouth, Henry, but your tone of voice says “ No. ” Remember God looks into your heart, and no words will hide the truth from Him ; and if this sin remains unrepented of, it will rise up against you in the day of judgment and condemn you. Think of what I have said, Henry, and if you will not heartily acknowledge your fault to me, do not attempt to cover it from the all-seeing eye of God. And now you may go, but remember, if you wish ever to say any thing more to me about your sin, I shall always be ready and willing to hear you. ’

Henry waited a moment to see whether Mr Walton had done ; finding he said no more, he took up his cap, and, with an unmoved countenance, making a bow, left the vestry.

‘ Alas ! ’ thought Mr Walton, ‘ I fear there is no hope for Henry ; an unacknowledged sin (for surely his acknowledgment was no acknowledgment) will ever be an hindrance to him, and prevent any real advance in the narrow way. ’

Now let us turn to a brighter picture. On Sunday morning, about half an hour before school, when Miss Walton was sitting alone in the parlour, a tap, tap, was heard at the door, and on Miss Walton’s saying ‘ Come in, ’ Charley opened it, and said, in a gentle voice, ‘ Please, ma’am, you told me to bring you my tickets, and Mr Walton saw me and told me to bring them to you here. ’

‘ Very well, Charley, ’ said Miss Walton, ‘ come in and show them to me. ’

He walked in, and handed her his little bag of tickets. Miss Walton soon changed them, and sitting down again, called Charley up to her, and said, 'I was glad, Charley, to hear that you were a brave little boy on Tuesday night, and refused to do what you knew was wrong.'

Charley looked surprised, and answered, 'Please, ma'am, how *did* you know?'

Miss W. I knew, Charley, because Mr Walton heard all that passed; he was in the foot-path on the other side of the hedge, and he told me.'

'Then you *did* know when you were teaching us the other night,' said Charley, in a very decided, satisfied tone.

'No, Charley,' answered Miss Walton, smiling, 'I did *not* know then. What made you so sure that I did?'

Charley looked bewildered again, and replied, 'Because 'you talked to us about sinning with our eyes, and sight-seeing. But *Mr Walton did* know. I thought he must when he gave me that copy, but I could not tell how.'

'Well, Charley, you seem to have been quite puzzled,' said Miss Walton, laughing.

'Yes, ma'am, I *was* puzzled,' he answered. 'I thought nobody knew any thing about it. I had only just left Henry, and then both you and Mr Walton seemed to know every thing. But, please, ma'am, why is it wrong to go and see sights?'

'All sight-seeing is not wrong,' answered Miss Walton; 'you might go and see wild beasts, or pictures, and a great many other things that would not be wrong.'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Charley, 'I see; but how are we to know which is right or wrong? I thought about it so much the other evening.'

Miss W. Why, I should say, Charley, it only requires a little calm thought, generally, to decide.

Let us take the instance of the show now in town. What is there to be seen there?

Charley. A dwarf and a giant, and they are made to talk and say queer things to each other.

Miss W. Now do you think it is pleasant to these poor men to be looked at, and forced to talk whether they feel inclined or not, in fact, to be treated like wild beasts?

‘I never thought of that,’ said Charley; ‘I suppose they don’t like it always.’

Miss W. No, and very often they are cruelly treated by their keepers, and beaten if they do not please. Besides, is it not a misfortune to be either a dwarf or so very large?

‘Yes, I should not like to be so,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Well, then, is it kind to look at misfortune without pity, indeed, only to laugh at it, and be amused by it?

Charley. No, ma’am, I am sure it is not.

Miss W. Very well, is it right then to go to *that* show?

He thought, and answered, ‘No; but I should never have thought of all these things if you had not told me of them, so as to know whether it was wrong.’

Miss W. Perhaps not all, but you would have known sufficient to enable you to judge. But if you cannot decide, what must you do?

‘Not go, I suppose,’ he replied.

Miss W. Indeed, Charley, it is always better to be on the safe side, and give up if you are in doubt, but that is not what I meant; cannot you ask those wiser than yourself.

‘Oh, yes, we *can* do that; at least *I* can; for I can ask you,’ said he, as he looked up in Miss Walton’s face with a happy smile.

‘Yes, Charley, you may ask me,’ she replied, ‘and you must believe that those who are older than

yourself are the best judges of what is good for you.'

'I know,' said Charley, 'what you and Mr Walton say is best, but I don't always think so, when you tell me things I don't like.'

Miss W. I dare say you don't, Charley, and then it is, my boy, you must submit your own will, and submit cheerfully, to your elders, even though you do not understand the reason of their wishes. It is sometimes hard at the time, Charley, but the reward will come afterwards.'

'I am sure, ma'am, I was very glad I did not go to the show the other night, when I heard all you said,' Charley replied.

Miss W. I have no doubt you would be happy afterwards for having done your duty, and sin would have brought its own punishment.

Charley. Yes, ma'am, poor Henry! his father beat him dreadfully, he told me all about it.

Miss W. I know he was punished, and I hope it will do him good; better to be punished in this world, Charley, than in the next.

Charley looked very serious, and then said, 'Yes, ma'am, I know it is. Please, ma'am, I was not quite good that evening.'

Miss W. Were you not, Charley, how so?

Charley. Please, ma'am, when Henry called me a good boy for not going, and laughed at me, I felt very angry, and was just going to hit him.

Miss W. And what stopped you, Charley?

Charley. Please, ma'am, something seemed to say in my ear that *that* would not be good, and then I did not do it.

Miss W. I am glad you listened to your conscience, Charley. The anger rising was wrong, but it would have been far worse if you had indulged it. But see, Charley, said Miss Walton, pulling out her watch, it is school-time; run on, and I will follow you.

Although Miss Walton hastily put on her bonnet, and followed Charley quickly to the school, she was only just in time for prayers, after which she immediately began the lesson.

‘Does Epiphany always come on the same day?’ she asked.

Edward. No, it may fall on any day in the week. It is always on the 6th of January.

Miss W. Very well; what does Epiphany mean? look at the head of the collect, and you will see.

Francis. Manifestation.

Miss W. Yes, and to manifest means—?

‘To show openly,’ answered Edward.

Miss W. That is right, ‘manifestation,’ then, or ‘Epiphany,’ means, a ‘showing forth.’ Whose manifestation do we commemorate to-day?

All. Jesus Christ’s.

Miss W. To whom was He manifested?

All. To the Gentiles.

Miss W. Who are meant by the Gentiles?

Edward. All the nations except the Jews.

Miss W. Who were God’s chosen people?

Alfred. The Jews.

Miss W. Yes, they had a knowledge of the true God, while all the other nations of the world were in ignorance of Him.. To what nation had Christ been promised?

Fred. To the Jews.

Miss W. Did they think He was to be the Saviour of any other nation?

George. No, they were always angry when He showed kindness to, or healed any Gentile.

Miss W. Had they rightly understood prophecy, would they have thought thus? Look at Isa. lx. 1-3.

Charley. ‘Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon

thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising.'

Miss W. Yes, and again, Isa. xlix. 6.

James. 'I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.'

Miss W. There are many other similar verses, which any of you who like may try and find out for me by the afternoon. But one more you shall tell me now. What did God promise Abraham? Look at Gen. xii. 3.

Sam. 'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.'

Miss W. At whose birth was this promise fulfilled?

Alfred. At our blessed Saviour's.

Miss W. And was it only one family, or one nation that was to be blessed by His birth?

'No, *all* the families of the earth,' said several.

Miss W. We see, then, that it had long been promised that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews. How does the collect say our Saviour was first manifested?

All. By the leading of a star.

Miss W. To what Gentiles did the star make Him known?

Several. To the wise men.

Miss W. Who was it that prophesied anything about a star?

George. Balaam.

Miss W. Read the prophecy, George.

George. 'I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and shall destroy the children of Sheth. (Numbers, xxiv. 17.)

Miss W. Very well. Balaam came from the

eastern land, and from the time that this prophecy was spoken, fifteen hundred years before our Saviour's birth, the wise men of the East had been watching for this star, perhaps scarcely understanding what the promise meant. But, at length, when they saw this wonderful star in the heavens, which, it is said, was like a cross, what did some of them do?

All. They followed it, and it led them to Jerusalem.

Miss W. What did they immediately inquire?

Andrew. Where is He that is born, king of the Jews?

Miss W. Why did they expect a king? What did Balaam say should rise, as well as a star?

Edward. A sceptre shall rise out of Israel.

Miss W. Who carries a sceptre?

Fred. A king.

Miss W. Yes; therefore, by a sceptre, they understood a king, and, accordingly, inquired at the kingly palace for Him that was born King of the Jews. Now, I want you to notice particularly with what expectations they would naturally have come. Had their journey been long?

Francis. Yes, very long.

Miss W. And what had they come to seek?

Charley. A king.

Miss W. In what sort of a place, then, would they expect to find Him?

Edward. In a palace.

Miss W. Yes, surrounded by state and magnificence. Must it not, therefore, have seemed strange to them, that Herod and the chief priests should know nothing of Him?

All. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. Were they discouraged?

Alfred. No, they went to search again.

Miss W. And what appeared immediately?

All. The star.

Miss W. Were they glad?

‘Yes, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy,’ said Andrew.

Miss W. Just so. Again they would go forth to seek a king, but where did the star stay its course?

Edgar. Over a stable.

Miss W. A stable was not a likely place in which to find a king. Were they not yet discouraged?

Edward. No, they entered in.

Miss W. Did they then see any thing like kingly power or magnificence?

Charley. No; they only saw a little child and His mother.

Miss W. Yet what did they do?

All. They fell down and worshipped Him, and presented to Him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Miss W. It seems, then, that God had revealed to them that He was something more than a king. Are kings worshipped?

All. No, only God is worshipped.

Miss W. Yes, and yet these wise men worshipped. Perhaps in the prophecy of Balaam there was something to lead them to expect more than a common king. Read the 19th verse of the same chapter.

David. ‘But of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion.’

Miss W. This alone, I think, would hardly have led them to worship Him as God. They must have known that a Saviour was expected, and they were waiting and looking for Him, and, therefore, God, when He sent the star, revealed to them whose birth it announced. But was there anything in outward appearances to make them think that little child was the only-begotten Son of God?

Charley. No, for He must have seemed to them like any poor little child.

Miss W. By all around they would naturally thus judge, but did they do so? Were they now discouraged and doubtful?

Edward. No, they immediately presented to Him gifts.

Miss W. Very well. They were satisfied; long had they waited for the star, weary had been their journey in following it, and now, outwardly, to the eye of the world, their expectations were disappointed; but was it really so?

All. No.

Miss W. Whom did they believe Him to be?

Francis. The King of the Jews.

Miss W. Yes, notwithstanding all, their faith in the promise of God was not shaken, for God had said a star and *sceptre* should arise, and therefore they—?

‘Believed,’ said Charley.

Miss W. The gifts they presented prove how undoubting was their faith. What did they present?

Several. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Miss W. These three gifts bear a mystic meaning, which you shall explain. Who are rich in gold in this world?

Samuel. Kings.

Miss W. They presented Him with gold, then, because He was—?

‘A King,’ said David.

Miss W. Where was frankincense used?

Edward. In the temple when offering up sacrifices.

Miss W. Yes, the frankincense was offered to whom?

Alfred. To God.

Miss W. Therefore the wise men offered it to the lowly Child because He was—?

‘God,’ said several.

Miss W. Lastly, myrrh was used at burials, and the wise men offered it to Him, because, although

both God and a King, He had become man that He might do what?

‘Die,’ said Charley. ‘How pretty that is! but did the wise men know it all?’

Miss W. Perhaps scarcely as well as we do, but something of the mystery of that lowly Child no doubt God revealed to them, because, you say, to the eye of the world all their expectations and hopes were—?

‘Disappointed,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. And yet they complained not, but were perfectly satisfied, and fell down, and—?

All. ‘Worshipped Him, and presented to Him gifts.’

Miss W. In the worship of the lowly Child, then, they had their ‘fruition,’ or enjoyment. A poor recompense to the short-sighted world, but rich beyond value to the eye of faith. By faith whom did they recognize in that little Babe?

Edward. ‘The only-begotten Son of God.’

Miss W. In Him they found all they sought, and having worshipped Him, they—?

‘Returned to their own country,’ said Fred.

Miss W. And these wise men, you say, were not Jews, but—?

All. Gentiles.

Miss W. They were the first fruits of the Gentile Church, and from that time there was to be ‘neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but all one in Christ.’ (Gal. iv. 28.) Have *we* any particular interest in His manifestation to the Gentiles? Were the English people Gentiles or Jews?

Edward. Gentiles.

Miss W. Yes, and if Christ had not come to save the Gentiles as well as Jews, we must have been left in ignorant heathenism, ‘having no hope, and without God in the world.’ Therefore at Christ’s Epiphany *we must—?*

'Rejoice,' said Alfred.

'Indeed, we must rejoice,' continued Miss Walton, 'that to us is made known the mystery of God. Now let us go on with the Collect. We pray to God mercifully to grant—?'

Several. 'That we, which know Thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of Thy glorious Godhead.'

Miss W. Before then we have the 'fruition,' or enjoyment, of the 'Godhead,' we must know God by—what?

Andrew. By faith.

Miss W. The wise men are an example to us of true faith. How did they show their faith?

Charley. By doing as they were bid.

Miss W. Yes, by obedience. They are, then, a pattern to us. Like them we must believe all—?

'That God tells us,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, all that He tells us about *Himself* and about *ourselves*. And we must show our faith by—what?

Charley. Our obedience.

Miss W. That is right. Whatever He tells us to do we must do it, believing it is for our good; whatever He appoints for us to suffer, we must suffer patiently, believing it is best for us; whatever He teaches us, however mysterious and difficult, we must receive with undoubting faith, and persevere in it, notwithstanding discouragements and the taunts of the world. Then will our faith be like that of—?

'The wise men,' said several.

Miss W. Yes, and like them we shall have the 'fruition.' How were they rewarded for their faith and obedience?

Francis. By seeing our Saviour and worshipping Him.

Miss W. Where shall we see Him?

Alfred. In heaven.

Miss W. But have we no reward for our faith now? Are good or wicked people the happier even in this world?

Alfred. Good people.

Miss W. What makes them happy?

Charley. Because God loves them.

Miss W. Can the world understand a good person's happiness?

Charley. I suppose not.

Miss W. No, the joys of a good Christian are too high for the world to understand; it judges now as it judged of the wise men, for it cannot understand *that* faith 'which is the evidence of things not seen.' Now all Christians outwardly profess to have faith. When do we make our outward profession?

Edgar. When we say the Creed.

Miss W. But is the outward confession sufficient?

Edward. No, we must believe with our hearts also.

Miss W. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' (Rom. x. 10.) After the wise men had *seen* our Lord, was the exercise of faith still required? Did the lowly child, lying in a manger, surrounded by cattle, without pomp and glory, appear like the only-begotten Son of God?

James. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No, their faith was still tried, but it was so strong that they wavered not, but worshipped Him without doubting. In like manner must we, boys, 'know Him now by faith,' despised as He is by the world. In lowliness and meekness we must believe in the lowly Jesus. If the wise men had expected great outward things, would they have been satisfied with what they found?

'No, I should think not,' said several.

Miss W. No, they sought not for greatness in this world, neither must we; but rather we must look beyond this life, when we shall have the—?

‘Fruition of the glorious Godhead,’ said several.

Miss W. Our faith here must be deep and sincere, then our joys hereafter will be great and unbounded; through Him who manifested Himself as a little Child to the Gentiles.

J. AND C. MOZLEY, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON. J. H. PARKER, OXFORD.
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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The First Sunday after the Epiphany.

COLLECT.

O Lord, we beseech Thee mercifully to receive the prayers of Thy people which call upon Thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MISS WALTON, on entering the school-room this Sunday morning, found none of her class assembled, except one or two of the younger boys, and Edward Coote. However, it still wanted ten minutes to the time for commencing school; she therefore sat down and began to talk to Edward.

‘Do you know,’ she asked, ‘where the rest of the boys are?’

‘They are sliding, ma’am, I think,’ he replied; ‘they were as I came by.’

‘I am afraid they will forget that it is Sunday morning, and how time is going,’ said Miss Walton. ‘David, you may go and tell them that I am here. Have you any work, Edward, now?’

‘No, ma’am, but I am going out with father, when the frost breaks up, to *hedgy*.’

‘To do *what*?’ asked Miss Walton, greatly puzzled.

‘To *hedgy*, ma’am.’

‘What do you mean by *hedgy*?’ she asked.

‘Please, ma’am, mending hedges and making
No. 9.

ditches. Father always *hedgies* for Farmer French, and I am going to help him.'

As Edward spoke, the door opened, and David entered, followed by most of the boys.

'Ah! boys,' said Miss Walton, 'you would have been late in school if I had not sent for you.'

'Please, ma'am, Charley and I were just thinking about coming,' replied Alfred.

'*Thinking* about it would not have been enough,' she answered, 'would it, Charley?'

Charley looked at her with a meaning smile, and replied, 'No, ma'am; and I suppose we should *only* have thought about it until it was too late, for it was, oh! so nice sliding.'

Miss W. I dare say it was, but you must remember that Sunday is not a day to be given up to sliding. Now, however, we must stop talking; it is time for prayers and to begin our lessons. I have a story to read to you, if you are attentive to your lesson. George, you say the Collect. What do you say Epiphany means?

Edward. Manifestation, or showing forth.

Miss W. Yes, and last Sunday we commemorated Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles. Do we read of any manifestation to-day? What is the Gospel about?

George. Christ sitting among the doctors.

Miss W. What was He there for?

Alfred. To be taught.

Miss W. He was there both to hear them and ask them questions. And what do we read of those who heard him?

Francis. They were astonished at his understanding and answers.

Miss W. What then did He manifest before them?

Edward. His understanding.

Miss W. That is right. He showed that he had

more than human understanding by His searching questions and wonderful answers. It was a custom for the Jewish children to be thus publicly taught in the temple by the doctors, and our blessed Saviour presented Himself for instruction among His companions.

‘It was like the way Mr Walton catechizes us in Church,’ said Fred.

‘Yes, Fred, it was something like it,’ replied Miss Walton; ‘only you don’t *ask* questions to be taught, but simply *answer* when you are questioned. But our Saviour manifested Himself yet more plainly. Who came to seek for Him?’

David. His parents.

Miss W. When they found Him, and His mother inquired, ‘Why hast Thou thus dealt with us?’ what did He reply?

Francis. ‘Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?’

Miss W. Whom did He mean by His Father?

Charley. Almighty God.

Miss W. By those few words, then, He manifested to His mother His Divine nature; for how had she addressed Him?

George. ‘Son, why has Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.’

Miss W. Joseph, you know, was not really His father. But who was His real father?

Alfred. God was His Father.

Miss W. Yes, and this great truth He taught to all who heard and understood those few apparently simple words, ‘Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?’ He manifested that He was—what?

Edward. The Son of God.

Miss W. Before we leave the Gospel, mark one more thing. Did He continue with the doctors after His Mother’s call?

Charley. No, ma'am. He went down to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.

Miss W. And His Mother, we read, 'kept all these sayings in her heart.' To her, then, His words conveyed some spiritual meaning, though we have no reason to suppose they did to the multitude. We will now turn to the Collect; our blessed Saviour's example may help us to understand it rightly. What does 'beseech' mean?

Edward. To beg earnestly.

Miss W. Whose prayers do we 'beseech' God to receive?

All. 'The prayers of His people which call upon Him.'

Miss W. And these we ask Him to receive—how? 'Mercifully,' said several.

Miss W. Who are meant by God's people?

Alfred. All good Christians.

Miss W. What do we pray God to do for His people?

Samuel. To 'grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.'

Miss W. Without the help of God we cannot even 'know' what is right. Look at 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Henry. 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves.'

Miss W. Of whom, then, must we seek?

George. Of God; 'our sufficiency is of God.'

Miss W. What did holy Job pray when he felt his own ignorance? Fred, you read Job, xxxiv. 32.

Fred. 'That which I see not, teach Thou me.'

Miss W. Can any of you, boys, remember any texts which show that God alone can teach us to 'know' and do what is right?

Edward. 'For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure?' (Phil. ii. 13.)

Francis. 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' (St. John, xv. 5.)

Miss W. Very well. The Church teaches us, therefore, to pray that God's people may both—?

All. 'Perceive and know what things they ought to do.'

Miss W. And when they 'perceive and know,' then they need—what?

Alfred. 'Grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.'

Miss W. By 'the same' you mean what God has taught them to—?

'Perceive and know,' said Francis.

Miss W. What do you mean by 'perceive'?

Samuel. To see.

Miss W. Yes, and we pray that they may 'perceive,' and then—?

'Know,' said several.

Miss W. Now let us see how much more difficult it frequently is practically to perceive and know what our duty is than you might at first suppose. What have you been taught about fighting and quarrelling?

All. That they are wrong.

Miss W. Yes, you 'know' this, and 'perceive' that it is your duty to live in love and—?

'Not to quarrel,' said Alfred.

Miss W. Very well; that is a general duty that you perceive, or are conscious of. But supposing you saw a great strong boy cruelly treating a little boy, what would you do?

'Stop him,' cried several.

Miss W. But *how* would you stop him?

'Fight him,' said Edgar, who was a brave boy, but not very anxious about his duty.

'Do you all give that answer?' asked Miss Walton.

'No,' said Alfred, 'we ought not to fight him, and yet we couldn't stand by and do nothing.'

Miss W. I don't think you could, and I don't think it would be right, either. Then you would feel it difficult to know how to act, would you?

'Yes, ma'am, but we might ask him to stop,' said Francis.

Miss W. That would certainly be the first thing to do; but supposing he would not listen?

'Surely, then,' said several, 'we ought to make him stop, if we were able.'

Miss W. Yes, I think you ought, even by force, and though you had to come to blows, if you felt sure the boy was doing wrong. But do you think it would always be quite easy to decide?

Charley. No, ma'am, it is sometimes very hard.

Miss W. That is what I want you to understand. You may be able to see and know your duty in a general way, but not always how to act in a particular instance; and therefore we see how much we need to pray that we may—?

'Perceive and know what things we ought to do,' they continued.

Miss W. Yes; and it is well *at the time* of difficulty to seek help from God. I have only given you one example, but it is the same with almost every duty. Is the first thing that comes into your mind always the best to do?

Edward. No, ma'am; we should feel inclined to fight a boy before we spoke.

Miss W. Therefore it will not do to follow your own inclinations, but you must seek to be guided by the commands of God. Boys like you particularly need to do this; for it is your great temptation to follow eagerly your first impulses, without stopping to think whether you are doing right or wrong. But when we both 'perceive and know' what we ought to do, is nothing more required?

Fred. Yes; 'grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.'

Miss W. Then it is not always easy to do our duty, even when we know it?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No; we need the grace of God to give us—?

'Power,' said Andrew.

Miss W. 'Grace and power' to do our duty, and to do it—how?

'Faithfully,' they all replied.

Miss W. In the instance you have given me of the difficulty of knowing what your duty is, you will see that there is also need of 'grace and power' to do it. Some boy, although he should see it was right to try and defend the little child, might feel—?

'Afraid,' said David.

Miss W. Yes, and others would feel ashamed; a false shame which is so common. Ought either fear or shame to prevent his helping?

'Oh, no!' cried several.

Miss W. Yet a boy who was ashamed or afraid would require grace to enable him to overcome his unwillingness. If he really wished to do right, who would help him?

Charley. God would.

Miss W. Yes, God by His grace would give him 'strength or power' to do his duty, and overcome his fear or shame. In every duty we need His grace to strengthen our own weak powers. And now tell me how our blessed Saviour was an example to us in these particulars. Whose business was He doing when He sat among the doctors?

Edward. The business of God, His Father.

Miss W. Yes; and He answered His Mother, 'Wist ye not that I *must* be about My Father's business?' He felt that His Father's business was, as it were, His duty. Yet, when His blessed Mother called Him, did He refuse to return with His parents?

George. No; 'He went down to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.'

Miss W. His situation, then, seemed one of difficulty. To a common child it would have been hard to decide between the business of His Father and the call of His Mother. Did *He* doubt?

'No, He was God, and He knew which was right,' said Alfred.

Miss W. And who would teach even a little child to know his duty when in a similar difficulty?

'Almighty God,' said Charley.

Miss W. Indeed, if you ask Him, He will always guide you in the right, and give you power to do it; and your blessed Saviour, having been Himself tempted like as we are, feels even for the difficulties of boys such as you. How do we pray that we may do our duties?

Several. 'Faithfully.'

Miss W. We may, then, seem to fulfil our duties, without having done them 'faithfully?' Would they, under such circumstances, be acceptable to God?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. How ought you to do your daily work?

Edward. We ought to do it well.

Miss W. What do you mean by doing it well?

Edward. Not to idle, or hurry over it.

Miss W. Supposing you were left to dig a piece of ground, and you wished to play, and therefore, instead of digging deep, only just loosened the top—

'That would be very badly done,' said Charley.

Miss W. How ought you to have done it when you were trusted?

Alfred. As well as possible.

Miss W. Yes; if you did it as well as you could, then you would have done it—how?

Edward. 'Faithfully.'

Miss W. But, on the other hand, if you were careless over your work, you would have been—?

‘Unfaithful,’ said several.

Miss W. Now I think you will understand what is meant by doing what we ought to do ‘faithfully.’—

Charley. To do it as well as we can.

Miss W. Yes, that is partly what is meant. We must do it also with a single heart, because God bids us, without thinking what is pleasant to ourselves. In the example given—would you, in doing your work well, be faithful to man only, or to God also?

Alfred. To God also.

Miss W. Yes, the smallest action you do, if done rightly, is done to God; and you must pray to Him to enable you to do each little action of your daily life ‘faithfully.’ Now I will read to you my promised story. I think it will make your lesson plainer.

THE STORY OF BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER I.

THERE stands in a small secluded village in England, a beautiful little church, surrounded by trees. The only approach to it is through a wood, by one narrow winding road. Along this, a funeral is now drawing near the church-yard gate, and is met by the clergyman of the parish. The followers of her who is going to be laid in her last earthly resting-place are few. There is, however, among them, one boy of about twelve years old, who weeps with unrestrained grief, as though his very heart would break. The priest approaches with words of comfort, and the boy raises his eyes, and for a while the words seem to soothe his grief, and he dries his falling tears, and listens to the calm voice of the clergyman as he

reads, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.'

Then came the words of the Psalm, 'And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is even in Thee;' and they seem spoken to him, and to bring peace with them, and he thinks within himself, 'Mother used to say I must hope in God when she had gone, and that He would not forsake me.' At length they all stand round the grave, and the coffin is lowered; and then again the heart of little Basil sinks within him, and he feels indeed alone, an orphan in the waste world. He looks into the grave—a long, earnest look, as though that would bring back to him his lost mother, and he hardly hears the remainder of the service. But now it is concluded, and all prepare to leave. Basil, however, stirs not, but weeps with heartfelt grief.

Poor little Basil! no wonder he weeps! for the grave by which he now stands is the grave of his mother. His father had died many years before, and he and his mother had lived on in poverty, but in the happiness of mutual love, earning daily sufficient for their daily wants. But now she had gone, and Basil had to face the cold world alone. The next day he was to be apprenticed to a shoemaker in the neighbouring town. This the parish authorities fixed for him, and he was obliged to submit. While Basil stood by the grave of his mother the clergyman joined him, and spoke to him words of comfort. So kindly, so feelingly he spoke, that Basil again dried his weeping eyes and felt his hopes renewed. Mr Henley reminded him that God had especially promised to watch over the fatherless, and bade him look to Him for comfort and guidance; and then, returning into Church, they knelt down together, and Mr Henley earnestly besought God graciously to protect and bless the orphan boy. When they rose from their knees, Basil felt almost happy, and with a

firm determination that he would try and be a good boy, that he might meet his dear mother again in a better and happier world, he left the grave.

The next day found Basil at his new home; and, oh! how different it was to the one he had been accustomed to! The house was situated in a narrow, dirty street, and the work-room looked out into a still more gloomy yard. Very soon, however, he was set to work, in company with his master, John Hardman, his two sons, and a journeyman. They laughed and talked, though they kept their fingers steadily employed, and paid little attention to Basil, except now and then to direct him in his occupation. Many things he heard as he sat silently at work which shocked his feelings and made him more unhappy; for he knew the words they spoke were wicked words, the jests they indulged in, unseemly; and while he thought of his late pure and happy home, the tears trickled slowly down his cheeks, and he felt as if he *could* not live in the midst of such scenes. His attention was, however, diverted from these musings by the voice of Robert, the younger of the two boys, who, though having little sense of right and wrong, was naturally good-natured. He crept close up to Basil, and said, 'What's the matter, lad? don't be a baby; you will be used to your work soon.'

'I don't mind my work,' he replied; and then, unwilling to betray what his thoughts really were, he roused himself, and asked, 'How many hours do you work?'

'That depends upon *him*,' Bob answered, winking towards his father as he spoke.

But at that moment the man turned his head, and Bob instantly sprang into his seat again, and tried to appear busy. His father, however, had seen him, and angrily bade him mind his work, or he should feel the stick; then turning to Basil, he said,

‘And you, boy, I tell you at once, must work, or you’ll get nothing to eat here. I didn’t take you to be idle, and to make others so too.’

Basil knew this was unjust, but, making no reply, he continued his work.

Presently Hardman left the room, and instantly Bob was at Basil’s side again, saying, ‘Now, lad, we can talk, and father will know nothing about it. I want to put you up to our ways here.’

Basil instantly felt this was not right, and yet doubted whether he ought to speak. Robert was older than himself, and it would look unkind to reprove him, when he evidently spoke out of kind feeling to him. Rapidly again he thought—‘But surely that is the very reason why I ought to speak; if he were talking to any body else it would be no business of mine.’ He therefore looked at Bob, and said, ‘You are very good to want to talk to me, but you had better not, as your father told you to mind your work.’

‘Stuff, boy!’ he replied; ‘I tell you he’ll know nothing about it.’

Again Basil thought, ‘Must I say more?’ and again he ventured, and said, ‘Oh, but that makes no difference; please go on with your work. I shouldn’t like you to be scolded on my account.’

At this Bob burst into a loud laugh, and called out, ‘I declare we’ve got a young parson here. He thinks I am to work when father is out of sight; but I promise him he’s mistaken.’

The laugh was joined in by the other two, and poor Basil felt the blood mounting into his cheeks, partly with shame, partly with annoyance, but he wisely said no more. The sound of Hardman’s footsteps approaching the room soon brought Bob to his seat again, and made the other two work diligently.

At length the dinner-hour arrived, and the boys, throwing down their work, rushed out into the

court; the two men also left the room. Basil, however, sat still, thinking over his past and future life. He was afraid he had vexed Robert, and yet he felt sure he had done right, and this thought comforted him. He dwelt a few moments upon the words the clergyman had said to him by his mother's grave, and then, standing up—for he feared to kneel, lest he should be seen—he prayed to God to bless him, and teach him what he ought to do; and the words that came unsought into his mind were those of the Collect for the first Sunday after the Epiphany. It seemed to express just what he wished; that God would teach him to 'perceive and know what things he ought to do, and also give him grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.' The scene of that morning had made him feel how hard it was sometimes to know what was right, and how harder still it was to do it. Having said this Collect and the Lord's Prayer, he felt much happier, and in a moment afterwards, when Bob entered the room, saying, 'Come, (what do they call you?) don't be a parson any longer; come and play while you can; it isn't much that you'll get, I can tell you'—he cheerfully answered, 'I'll come,' and, taking up his cap, followed Bob into the yard, and joined the boys for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour in their play, almost enjoying himself.

The dinner being ready, stopped their game, and he followed his companions into the dirty kitchen, where the rest of the family were assembled, one elder girl and two or three children. And now Basil had another difficulty. He had always been taught to ask God's blessing on the food he was about to eat, and he waited, expecting it as usual; but they all instantly began to eat without such a thought. Happily, Basil was not yet helped, so that he had time, unobserved, to say a few words to himself, and to think that another day he would do it

unnoticed before he came into the room, for he doubted whether it would be right for him, a little boy, to attract attention by doing differently to all the others at table.

‘And now, boys,’ said Miss Walton, ‘it is Church-time ; we must leave the story to be finished another day.’

‘Please, ma’am,’ said Alfred, ‘Robert did not do his work “faithfully,” did he, when he jumped up and left it when his father was out of sight?’

Miss W. No, Alfred, he certainly did not ; but little Basil was faithful to his sense of duty, when he begged Bob not to leave his work, though it was very unpleasant to do so. Duty is not always pleasant, as we shall find when we go on with the story ; but it brings its own reward.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Second Sunday after Epiphany.
COLLECT.

Almighty and Everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth; mercifully hear the supplications of Thy people, and grant us Thy peace all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BEFORE we begin the Catechising on the Collect, said Miss Walton, 'I want you to tell me what manifestation we read of to-day. To what do we read, in the Gospel, that Jesus was invited?'

Fred. To a marriage in Cana of Galilee.

Miss W. Was Galilee only inhabited by Jews?

Francis. By both Jews and Gentiles.

Miss W. Here, then, Jesus went to a marriage. What was wanting at the feast?

Edgar. Wine.

Miss W. How did our Saviour supply the want?

Several. He changed water into wine.

Miss W. Did he use any outward means?

Alfred. No, He ordered the water-pots to be filled with water, and bade the servants give to the governor.

'And when he tasted it,' said Charley, 'it was wine.'

Miss W. Our Saviour willed it, and it was done. Was this the work of man?

Edward. No, the work of God.

Miss W. Yes, the power of man alone could not, by a word, have wrought a change so instantaneous. Jesus, then, by this miracle, manifested His divine—?

Miss W. All are under His government, but all do not willingly submit. Do you remember how Hannah in her prayer describes God's unlimited power over every thing? Look at 1 Sam. ii. 6-10.

Edgar. 'The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich: He bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dung-hill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail; the adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed.'

Miss W. Do we read anything like this in the Psalms?

Francis. 'God is the Judge, He putteth down one and setteth up another.' (Ps. lxxv. 8.)

Miss W. Once more, look at Prov. xvi. 4.

Samuel. 'The Lord made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.'

Miss W. Thus we learn that nothing happens without God's governing Hand appointing or allowing. Do you remember any example we have given to us in the Bible, of God's exercising His rule over the disobedient and wicked?

Edward. Yes, Pharaoh was an example.

George. And Nebuchadnezzar, driven from his throne.

Miss W. Both of these are very good examples. Turn to the account of the second, Dan. iv. Who was Nebuchadnezzar?

Fred. King of Babylon.

Miss W. Yes, a king, and a very great king. 'Thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.' (ver. 22.) Did God warn him that punishment was coming upon him?

George. Yes, by a dream.

Miss W. Why did God do this?

Char. That he might repent. 'Wherefore, O king,...break off thy sins by righteousness, and thy iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.' (ver. 27.)

Miss W. Did he humble himself and repent?

All. No.

Miss W. Therefore, at the end of twelve months what happened?

George. He was driven from the dwellings of men.

Miss W. Yes, this punishment was sent upon him for his pride, but when his reason returned, what did he acknowledge concerning the power of God?

Alfred. 'I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?...Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol, and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.' (ver. 34, 35-37.)

Miss W. Very well; we see by this example, now even the wicked, though unwillingly, are under the government of God. But *how* ought we all to submit to Him?

Edward. Willingly.

Miss W. Yes, as the angels in heaven do. Now

that we have finished what may be called the address, before we begin the petition, tell me, why do you think the addresses are often so long and so full?

‘We don’t know, ma’am,’ said Charley.

Miss W. If we truly realize (I mean if it really enters into our minds) how great and awful God is; that He is Almighty—Everlasting—and governs all things, how should we feel in drawing near to Him? Supposing, now, that you are sent upon a message to some gentleman, and when you come to the house, you find everything very magnificent; many fine servants walking about, and carriages and horses standing at the door; indeed, everything to show you how great and rich this gentleman is. How do you feel about going up to the house to speak to him?

Char. We feel afraid.

Miss W. If you were as great and rich yourself, would you feel afraid?

‘I suppose not,’ said Charley; ‘we are afraid because everything is so much grander than we are.’

‘I was frightened,’ said Francis, ‘when Mr Walton sent me to Lord Norgrove’s; I felt so shabby and poor.’

Miss W. If it is thus with earthly greatness, what ought we to feel when we realize the greatness of God?

‘We ought to feel how little and sinful we are,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes; we should be humbled; and therefore we think of God’s greatness—of His Almighty and Everlasting power—before we begin to pray; in order that we may be duly humbled, and feel our own exceeding weakness and sinfulness, when compared to God’s great might and power. Should we, then, say the address thoughtlessly?

All. No, ma’am.

Miss W. No, we should try and realize what we say, to fit ourselves to offer the petitions that follow. What is the first petition in this Collect?

Several. 'Mercifully hear the supplications of Thy people.'

Miss W. We are sinful creatures; have we then any *claim* upon God to hear our prayers?

Edw. No, ma'am, we ask *through* Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Then whenever God does hear us, it is of His—what?

Several. Mercy.

Miss W. Yes, and are we able of ourselves to obtain what we ask of God?

George. No, we are not able of ourselves to help ourselves.

Miss W. Then when we apply to Him, it is because we are ourselves—?

'Helpless,' said Alfred.

Miss W. If a man gives assistance to one who has no claim upon him, and yet is utterly unable to help himself, what do you say he has been?

'Merciful,' replied several.

Miss W. So it is with Almighty God. It is merciful of Him to hear us when we have no *claim* upon Him, nay, may have even deserved His anger, and are quite unable to help ourselves. Do we pray that He will do this in the collect?

Henry. Yes, 'mercifully hear the supplications of Thy people.'

Miss W. That is, according to His mercy. We shall find similar expressions in the versicles in the litany.

Edward. 'Graciously look upon our afflictions.'

Alfred. 'Pitifully behold the sorrows of our hearts. Mercifully forgive the sins of Thy people. Favourably with mercy hear our prayer, and graciously hear us.'

Miss W. Now let us proceed with the collect. What do we ask Him to grant us?

Andrew. His 'peace all the days of our life.'

Miss W. What is the last thing the clergyman gives us before leaving church?

Charley. The blessing. 'The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.'

Miss W. Yes; and when the clergyman says these words, what do the people receive?

Alfred. 'The peace of God.'

Miss W. God gives it to them—by whom?

Frank. By the clergyman.

Miss W. When a clergyman enters a sick man's house, what does he first say?

Edward. 'Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in it.'

Miss W. And what peace rests upon it.

Several. 'The peace of God.'

Miss W. That is right, our blessed Saviour gave this power to His Apostles when He sent them to preach. Look at St. Luke, x. 5, 6.

Samuel. 'Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.'

Miss W. And what peace was that which the Apostles had to give?

Edward. The peace of God. 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' (St. John, xiv. 27.)

Miss W. Then the clergyman is, as it were, the channel by which the peace of God reaches the hearts of the people. But do *all* receive this peace when the blessing is pronounced?

Fred. No, only the good.

Miss W. If the house was not worthy, the peace would return again. So it is still; the peace of God only reaches those who are worthy. Does God never give peace except through the mouth of the clergyman?

‘Does He not give it when we pray for it?’
asked Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, He does; and therefore we ask for it in this collect; and we may not only use this prayer when the clergyman offers it up for us, and with us, in the Church, but at any time when we feel troubled or perplexed. When was it that our Saviour bequeathed His peace?

David. Just before His crucifixion.

Miss W. Very well, that was when He was praying for the *whole Church*, and the blessing of peace was left for every member of that Church. St. Paul promises this peace to all the faithful. Look at Phil. iv. 7.

Fred. ‘And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, *shall* keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus.

Miss W. God will mercifully grant us this peace whenever we earnestly seek for it; but still, which is His appointed means for our obtaining it?

Several. The blessing of the clergyman.

Miss W. When therefore the Bishop or Priest gives us the blessing, how should we receive it? as from whom?

Edward. As from God.

Miss W. In what posture do we receive it?

All. Kneeling.

Miss W. Should we repeat the words after the clergyman, or only listen?

Several. We should listen.

Miss W. Yes, we should listen to it as to a message from God, and hope and look for His peace to rest upon us, even as we pray that it may do. How long do we pray for it to remain with us?

James. All the days of our life.

Miss W. And though it is spoken to us *by* the clergyman, we can only receive it *through* whom?

All. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Miss W. Yes, it can only be through Him who is the Prince of Peace. And now that will do for the lesson on the Collect.

‘Please, ma’am,’ said several of the boys, ‘do read some more of Basil to us.’

‘I intended to do so, boys,’ answered Miss Walton, ‘if there were time. As there is still a quarter of an hour, I think I may begin. Where did we leave off?’

‘Basil was going to dinner,’ said Alfred.

‘Very well; now sit still,’ said Miss Walton, ‘and I will go on.’

The boys drew their forms closer, and looked eagerly at Miss Walton, while she read the conclusion of the first chapter of

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

The time taken over the dinner at Hardman’s was but short, and immediately afterwards they all returned to their work again. Much the same scenes occurred as in the morning, only they talked rather more to Basil than they had done before; and Dick, the eldest boy, sat next to Basil, Hardman thinking he was less likely than Bob to play with the new comer. Dick was between seventeen and eighteen years old, and though a handsome-looking boy, there was a something in his face that Basil turned from with dislike. There was a knowing, cunning, look about him, which seemed to say he was, in his own opinion, wiser and cleverer than his companions. When he spoke to Basil, as he did many times, he had none of the off-hand, friendly manner which was so remarkable in Bob; rather he appeared to feel that Basil was quite inferior to himself, and he spoke with a patronizing air.

‘You get on well with your work, Basil,’ he said; ‘if you only stick to it, you’ll make a good workman, I dare say.’

‘I hope I shall,’ replied Basil, ‘but it feels awkward to me now ; you work so fast to what I do.’

‘I work very fast,’ said Dick ; ‘but you can’t say so of Bob there—he’s an idle fellow—you must not copy him, or you’ll never come to any good.’

Basil made no reply to this, thinking it unkind of Dick to speak so of his brother ; and in truth Basil felt much more inclined to like Bob than Dick ; nor had he noticed much difference in their manner of working ; shortly after, Dick spoke again, saying, ‘I’ll make haste and finish my bit of work, and then I’ll help you.’

‘Thank you,’ said Basil, ‘that is very kind ;’ but at the same time he felt uncomfortable, as though Dick had some hidden reason for his kindness, and though he tried to put away the thought as unjust, Dick’s manner recalled it again and again.

Time went on in this way until the day’s work was finished, and Dick, true to his word, *had* helped Basil, and had throughout the afternoon treated him with the greatest outward kindness. He showed him how to put up the shutters, and do several little pieces of work which were expected of the apprentice, and then bidding him good night, saying he was going out, and most likely Basil would be asleep when he came back, he called Crossman, the foreman, and they set off together. Dick whispered, as he passed Basil, ‘You needn’t tell father we went out,’ and before he could receive an answer, the two left the yard. Basil ran to the door after them, and just heard Dick say to his companion, as they turned down the narrow alley close by ; ‘I could make any thing of that boy. I dare say he’ll prove useful to us some day.’

Basil wondered what they could mean, and whether they were speaking of him. While he stood pondering, Bob ran out of the shop, and throwing his arm round Basil’s neck, said : ‘There !

again you stand thinking; I never saw the like of you before. You are always asleep, or something. I shall never get on with you, if you are not more alive. What are you standing there for?

‘I’ve just been shutting the shutters,’ he replied, ‘and then looked out into the street. It is so odd to me to live in a town.’

‘Why, where did you live?’ asked Bob. ‘In some out-of-the-way place, I am sure.’

‘I lived near a village, our house standing in the middle of a field, and I used to play there, and in the garden,’ said Basil.

‘Ah! but that was stupid work; I am sure you’ll like the town better. Come! we’ll go out, and you shall see something of it,’ said Bob.

‘Are we allowed to go?’ asked Basil.

‘Oh! yes,’ replied Bob, ‘if we arn’t out very late, father don’t mind, when our work is done; only he tells us to get to bed in good time, which I sometimes do, and sometimes don’t. It is only half-past eight now, so that we can go for a bit.’

Basil consented, and they set off together. It was but little they could see by lamp-light, but that little was new and interesting to Basil. Many of the shops were still open, and they looked bright and gay. Presently they passed a Church, and Basil asked if that was where Bob went to?

‘When I was a little shaver,’ said he, ‘I used to go, but now I don’t go anywhere.’

Basil felt surprised, and said he always went to Church.

‘You will soon leave it off, then,’ said Bob, ‘for you’ll get no breakfast on Sunday morning till ten o’clock, and in the evening mother goes out, and the apprentice takes care of the house.’

Poor Basil knew not what to say to this; at length he asked, ‘Would they be angry if I went in the morning? am I wanted then?’

‘No, you arn’t wanted, that I know of, but you’ll not be fool enough to go without your breakfast, surely.’

‘I have often gone without breakfast,’ he replied, ‘so I suppose I can again.’

Just then, the clock striking nine, Basil proposed that they should go back, so turning round they retraced their steps, keeping up a full talk all the way. Reaching home, they went straight up to bed, and, to Basil’s surprise, found Dick and Crossman there before them, both reading a dirty-looking pamphlet.

Bob and Basil began to prepare themselves for bed. And now again poor Basil was in a sore difficulty. Crossman and Dick threw themselves on their bed with all their clothes on, and Bob had his off in an incredibly short time, and immediately jumped into the other bed, which Basil was to share with him. They none of them read the Bible, none of them knelt in prayer; what was Basil to do? An almost unconquerable feeling of shame came over him, and he felt as if he must do as others did. He stood for a moment irresolute, and the Tempter whispered in his heart, ‘Say your prayers after you get into bed.’ But to this his conscience replied, ‘No, I have been told I ought to kneel; I must do it to-night, or I never can.’ But, oh! how unhappy he felt! He would have given worlds to be alone for five minutes.

‘Do be quick and put out that candle,’ shouted Crossman; ‘I can’t sleep with that light burning.’

‘I’ll put it out directly,’ answered Basil.

‘Put it out *now*, will you,’ answered the man.

With trembling hands Basil obeyed, and then, sinking on his knees, feeling the darkness quite a relief, with a heavy heart he began his evening prayers. As he proceeded his heart became lighter, and he thought he saw his mother looking smilingly upon him, and he felt that his Almighty Father was

pleased with him, and as he knelt he felt more and more brave, making, before he rose, a firm resolution that nothing should prevent him saying his prayers night and morning. He rose up in peace, and with a noiseless step reached his bed and crept into it. Crossman, however, had heard him move, and, with an angry voice, ordered him to lie still, but he did not seem to know that Basil had only just got into bed. He *did* lie still, nor was it long before he fell into a sweet, sound sleep, from which he never awoke until daylight next morning.

Thus passed the first day of Basil's apprenticeship. It had been one of difficulty to a child like him. But, trusting in a higher Power than his own feeble strength, he had acted bravely and rightly throughout; and when he laid his weary head upon his pillow, he felt that peace which ever follows the right discharge of duty—a peace that even his lonely situation and the many difficulties that surrounded him could not take away, for it was the 'peace of God, which passeth all understanding.'

'We must now leave Basil,' said Miss Walton. 'We will leave him while he is at peace.'

'That is not all the story, is it?' asked several.

Miss W. No, not all, but as much as we have time for now.

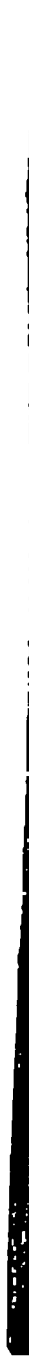
'I do so want to hear more,' said Charley.

'And so do I, and so do I,' echoed several.

'You must wait patiently, notwithstanding,' said Miss Walton. 'Perhaps you shall hear more next Sunday.'

'O, don't say "perhaps," say "certainly,"' begged Alfred.

'I must only say "perhaps,"' said Miss Walton, 'or I might be obliged to break my word.'



STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Third Sunday after Epiphany.

COLLECT.

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PART I.

‘WHO will fetch my Prayer-Book ?’ asked Miss Walton, as she took her seat, ‘I have forgotten it.’

‘I will,’ said Fred ; and although several others called out, ‘I will,’ Fred was at the school-room door before any of them had risen from their seats, and holding it in his hand to prevent others passing him, he asked, ‘Please, ma’am, where shall I find it ?’

‘The maid will give it to you out of my bookcase,’ answered Miss Walton, ‘if you will ask her.’

In an instant Fred was gone, and before prayers began, returned, and with a bright smile, and a face flushed with the speed at which he had run, handed the book to Miss Walton.

‘Thank you,’ she said, ‘willing Fred. I know whom I will have for my little page when I want one. You are just in time, Fred, for prayers.’ Then Miss Walton, standing up, gave her different words of command.

‘*Silence !*’ and in a moment all voices were hushed.

‘*Stand :*’ and like one body they stood.

‘*Kneel.*’ and again like one body they all knelt forward where they stood.

‘*Attention!*’ and instantly the children shut their eyes and put their hands together, while she (or Mr Walton, if he were present) read a few collects and versicles, when the children’s voices might be heard in the united Amen, and in the answers to the versicles, offering their hearty prayers to Almighty God.

‘All the Collects well repeated but yours, Henry,’ said Miss Walton. ‘You are sadly careless in your learning. I shall expect the Collect more perfectly said in the afternoon. And now, boys, read the Epistle and Gospel. We pray God in this Collect to look mercifully upon—what?’

Several. Our infirmities.

Miss W. Who do you read in the Gospel came to our Lord, and worshipped Him?

Fred. A leper.

Miss W. What is meant by a leper?

Edward. A person ill with the leprosy.

Miss W. What sort of a disease was the leprosy?

Alfred. A very dreadful disease, which no man could cure.

Miss W. What do you mean by infirmity? The leprosy was this poor man’s—?

‘Infirmity,’ said several.

Miss W. Was it an infirmity of body or mind?

All. Body.

Miss W. Yes, infirmity means weakness. Any sickness or deformity may be called an—?

‘Infirmity,’ said several.

Miss W. How does a fever leave a person?

‘Weak,’ said Charley.

Miss W. And if you see a person lame, or blind, you say it is an—?

‘Infirmity,’ again they replied.

Miss W. All these are infirmities of body, and leprosy was one of the most dreadful; but the mind

may also be infirm, and the leper is an example to us of this also. What did he pray to our Saviour?

Several. 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.'

Miss W. 'If Thou'—what?

'Wilt,' said Alfred.

Miss W. What then did he doubt?

Edward. Whether our Lord was willing.

Miss W. Did he doubt His power?

Edward. No; he said 'Thou canst.'

Miss W. Very well; he had faith in our Saviour's power to heal, but not in His *willingness*. His want of faith, then, was an—?

'Infirmity,' answered Fred.

Miss W. Yes, it was an infirmity of mind—a weakness of faith. How do we ask God to look upon our infirmities of both body and mind?

David. 'Mercifully.'

Miss W. How did our Lord look upon those of the leper?

George. 'Mercifully.' He put forth His hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be thou clean.'

Miss W. In our Saviour's healing of the doubting leper what did He manifest? You say He looked upon his infirmities mercifully. What did he then manifest?

Francis. His mercy.

Miss W. Yes, His mercy, His power, and His glory, and by all of these, His Divine nature. In the other miracle recorded in the Gospel, what did He also manifest?

'His mercy again,' said Alfred.

'And His power,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, in all His miracles He showed forth His Divine power, and in most of them His mercy. Now we may turn again to the Collect. What is the second petition?

Several. 'In all our dangers and necessities stretch forth Thy right hand to help and defend us.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'necessities'?

Francis. Wants.

Miss W. 'Needs' would perhaps be a better expression. Then when we are in need, what do we require from God?

'His help,' said Edward.

Miss W. And when we are in 'danger,' then we want God to—?

'Defend us,' said Fred.

Miss W. Therefore we pray Him to stretch forth His right hand to '*help*' us in all our—?

'Necessities,' said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, and to '*defend*' us in our—?

'Dangers,' said several.

Miss W. When we speak of God's 'right hand,' it is what is called speaking figuratively. Look at what the first article says of the nature of Almighty God.

Edward. 'There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions.'

Miss W. In what part of man's body does his strength chiefly lie?

Samuel. In his right hand or arm.

Miss W. Yes; then when we speak of God helping us with His right hand, or arm, we do not mean that he has a body, parts, or passions, but that He should help us by His—?

'Strength,' said Alfred.

Miss W. Just so; we use terms that we are accustomed to, in order to bring down the idea of God's unbounded strength to our feeble understandings. You will often find God's right hand and arm spoken of in the Bible. Look at Psalm xliv. 3, 4.

Andrew. 'For they got not the land in possession through their own sword, neither was it their own arm that helped them, but *Thy right hand*, and *Thine arm*, and the light of Thy countenance.'

Miss W. And again, Psalm cviii. 6.

David. 'Let Thy right hand save them, and hear Thou me.'

Miss W. You say that leprosy was a very dreadful disease. Can any of you tell me what it is a type of? What makes our souls sick?

'Sin,' said Charley.

Miss W. Can sin be cured by man?

Alfred. No, only by God.

Miss W. From whom were lepers driven?

George. Away from man.

Miss W. Yes; turn to Leviticus, xiii. 45, 46.

James. 'And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, "Unclean, unclean." All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.'

Miss W. Very well. From whose presence does sin drive us?

Alfred. From the presence of God.

Miss W. Yes; and while sin is upon us, and unpardoned, how are we like the leper?

Several. We are unclean.

Miss W. Then what is leprosy the type of?

Edward. Sin.

Miss W. What did this poor leper need when he came to Jesus?

Fred. He needed healing.

Miss W. Yes, he was in great need or 'necessity,' and he looked to God for—?

'Help,' said Francis.

Miss W. In like manner we are, by sin, unclean, unable to help ourselves; some powerful assistance is necessary; therefore we pray to God to—?

'Stretch forth His right hand to help us,' said Edward.

Miss W. And how will God help us against our sins?

Edward. By making us clean.

Miss W. Yes, from past defilement, and giving us strength against future—?

‘Temptations,’ said Francis.

Miss W. When the leper was cleansed, would he return to the dwellings of men?

George. Yes, when he had shown himself to the priest.

Miss W. And when our sins are pardoned, to whose favour are we restored?

Several. The favour of God.

Miss W. Yes; but by our sins we are not only unclean, and helpless, but in—what?

Francis. In danger.

Miss W. What are we in danger of?

Edgar. Hell fire.

Miss W. Therefore what do we pray God to do for us in our dangers?

Alfred. To defend us.

Miss W. What was the centurion’s servant in danger of?

‘Death,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes, and those who are sick with sin are in ‘danger’ of eternal death. Who alone can ‘defend’ us from it?

All. God.

Miss W. Very well, sin puts our souls into danger and makes us helplessly weak, and unclean, so that we have need of God both to—?

‘Help and defend us,’ said Andrew.

‘Yes,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘to “defend” us from the effects and power of sin, and to “help” us in our weakness. But now let us see what comes before sin. What do we pray God not to lead us into?’

Francis. Temptation.

Miss W. And when temptation comes, are we strong enough to resist it of ourselves?

All. No.

Miss W. What do we need then ?

Edward. God's help.

Miss W. What are we in danger of ?

Francis. Yielding to the temptation.

Miss W. Being in danger, then, we want God to—?

‘Defend us,’ said Charley.

Miss W. That is right. Now we have hitherto spoken of the dangers and necessities of our *souls* ; but have we no others ?

Edward. Yes, those of our bodies.

Miss W. What sort of danger are our bodies subject to ?

Char. We are in danger of being hurt, or being ill.

Miss W. Yes, those are its dangers ; and what are its daily *necessities* ?

Edward. Food and clothing.

Miss W. And when our bodies are in danger, we may pray to God to—?

All. Defend us.

Miss W. And when they are in need or ‘necessity,’ we may pray to Him to—?

All. ‘Help us.’

Miss W. That is right. We learn, then, from the Gospel, how willing God is to hear our prayers. Did our Saviour turn away from either the leper or the centurion ?

Fran. No, He listened to them.

Miss W. And granted the help they needed. Would a mere man have allowed a leper to approach him ?

‘No, a leper was forbidden to come near any one,’ said George.

Miss W. Yet we do not find that our Saviour turned him away : and most thankful we ought to be to Him that He permits us, although we are unclean, to approach Him. But will He help those who do not try to help themselves ? If the leper had not sought to be cleansed, would Jesus have healed him ?

‘I suppose not,’ said Francis.

Miss W. And will He forgive us our sins, if we do not ask Him to do so, and strive against them ourselves?

Charley. No, ma’am.

Miss W. Remember this, boys; God is willing and ready to help you in dangers and necessities, but only if you are trying to do your best, and, feeling your own weakness, seek for help of Him.

Miss Walton here stopped, and continued silent for a moment or two, as if in thought; then, turning to Henry, she said: ‘Henry, you have not answered me one question this morning, or seemed to pay any attention. What is the reason?’

Henry made no reply, and put on a hardened look, which seemed to say, ‘I did not choose to answer.’

‘Have you nothing to say?’ continued Miss Walton. ‘I can tell you the reason, Henry. You were angry about your Collect, and you have been indulging ill-temper instead of minding your lesson.’

‘I cared nothing about my Collect,’ he replied.

‘You ought to have cared, but not in the way you did,’ said Miss Walton. ‘I feel very much displeased with you, Henry.’

Again he murmured something in the same unconcerned tone, but Miss Walton did not hear what he said. She waited a few moments again, and then continued: ‘Henry, take your book, and go to the other end of the school-room and learn your Collect. I cannot allow you to hear the story to-day.’

Henry looked surprised, but did not attempt to move. Charley and Alfred turned pale, as they always did when any of the boys were in disgrace. Miss Walton seeing he did not move, spoke again—‘Henry, look at me. Did you hear what I said to you? Do it instantly!’

This time he obeyed, and, though with a very bad grace, took the place he had been desired.

‘And now,’ said Miss Walton, turning to the other boys, ‘I will go on with the story;’ but Charley crept up to her side, and said, ‘Please, ma’am, *do* let Henry come.’

Miss Walton replied, ‘No, I cannot to-day, Charley; he is naughty, and must be punished.’

‘I am sure, ma’am, he is sorry, and won’t do so any more,’ then pleaded Alfred.

‘He has not said so,’ answered Miss Walton, ‘or perhaps I should not have sent him away.’

‘Oh, but I am sure he must be,’ answered Charley. ‘May I ask him?’

‘Yes, if you wish to do,’ said Miss Walton, hoping that Charley’s kindness might soften Henry’s unconcern; but she was mistaken. Charley was sullenly told to go back and let him alone, he did not want to hear the story; and Charley, with a disappointed look, took his place, while Miss Walton began to read the second chapter of Basil.

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER II.

WE may now pass over some months, while Basil had been making a tolerably quick progress in the knowledge of his trade, and had also learned to find his way about the town, for it was his business to carry parcels to the different purchasers. He had by this time become accustomed to his master, and by diligence had gained a portion of his good will. Use, also, had reconciled him to many things which had troubled and pained him at the beginning of his apprenticeship. Even the evil that he saw did not shock him as much as at first, and this, when he thought about it, seemed to him wrong. It was not that he joined in it; on the contrary, he had successfully watched himself, and guarded against mixing in evil conversation, or using bad words.

Still he was not *shocked* with them as at first ; too plain a proof of the infirmity of the heart, which, while we are upon earth, is not perfectly pure and holy, as we hope it will be hereafter.

Sometimes he got into trouble. One day in particular, when he had been sent with a parcel to a house some miles from the town, being delighted to get once more among the green fields and wild flowers, he forgot that his time was not his own, and stayed enjoying himself for a long period, so that, on reaching the town on his way back, he found he was an hour or two later than he ought to have been. He trembled to meet his master, and stood for a moment uncertain what to do. He felt tempted to make some false excuse, and, perhaps, if he had stood much longer, he would have given way ; but he was so accustomed to follow the voice of his conscience, which now whispered to him to waste no more time, that he instantly ran on, determined to brave all. Without once stopping to think, he walked straight into the work-room, where they were all assembled, and, as he expected, found his master very angry. Without asking Basil a single question, or giving him time to speak, he gave him a severe beating. Much too severe it was ; but Basil would not excuse himself, and when Hardman stopped, and still holding him by the arm, said, ‘Now, another time, will you stay out playing when you are sent on a message ? What have you been doing ?’

He frankly answered, ‘I am very sorry ; I will not stay again. I did not know how long I played, it was so pleasant in the fields.’

His manner seemed even to soften Hardman, and he said, in a kind tone for him, ‘Mind you don’t, then ; and now go to your work, it is not worth while sitting down here ; go clean out the yard.’

With the two boys Basil had become quite *friendly*. Indeed, from the first moment, Bob

seemed to take a strange fancy to him, the more strange, as they were such opposite characters. Basil's behaviour, on the day that Hardman had beaten him struck Bob especially, for he then saw that, with all Basil's thoughtful quietness and timidity of manner, he was no coward, and though he felt *he* should not have acted in the same way himself, he could not but admire such bold straightforward conduct as Basil showed on this particular occasion. Basil exercised an unconscious influence over him for good, and their affection for each other increased daily. Bob had several times accompanied Basil to Church, though half ashamed of himself for doing so, and in many little ways had changed his behaviour.

Dick had gone on in much the same way as before, on the whole; kind to Basil, though always laughing at him for his strictness, as he called it, and doing his best to gain an influence over him. Basil occasionally went out with him in an evening, and Dick had an idea that he could lead Basil to do any thing he chose. It is true that he had never tried to make him act contrary to his principles; but because, on several occasions, Basil had yielded to him in matters of indifference, Dick felt certain that he could influence him in any way he desired, and when it suited his purpose, he intended to do so.

Basil, on the other hand, although he no longer had so much of the disagreeable suspicion which he first felt, could not really like Dick, for he saw him do and say many wrong things, with a bold determination that made Basil somewhat afraid of him.

Thus matters stood, when one evening Dick came to Basil, and said: 'Will you come with me to-night? I will take you to see the wax-works.'

'I should like it above all things,' said Basil, 'but I have no money.'

'Never mind that; I'll pay for you,' replied Dick.

‘That is very kind of you,’ said Basil; ‘I shall like it so much. Is Bob going?’

‘Never mind Bob,’ was the reply; ‘he can go whenever he likes. You be at the street corner, at a quarter past eight, and you’ll find me;’ and, so saying, he turned quickly away.

‘I wonder why I am to meet him at the street corner,’ thought Basil; ‘he always seems to have some secret: however,’ he thought, ‘there can’t be any harm in going to the wax-works. I only wish Bob was going. I’ll ask him if he’ll come.’

With this thought he went to his work, to try and get it finished by eight o’clock. Bob was not in the room, so Basil could say nothing then. Dick also came in late, but his father took no notice of it. Bob, however, still did not come; and, on inquiring, Basil found that he had gone out with parcels, and was not expected back until late. Basil wondered how it was *he* had not been sent; and then thought it was, perhaps, Dick’s kindness to set him free, and as quickly he felt uncomfortable, remembering Dick’s unwillingness that Bob should accompany them.

By eight o’clock Basil having finished his work, asked Hardman if he might shut the shutters and go. Dick had gone some little time before.

Hardman gave his permission, and Basil ran up stairs to prepare. He felt very happy, and yet now and then a doubtful feeling would come over him. He wished Bob were going. He thought that would be a sort of protection. With this feeling, before he left the room, he knelt down and earnestly prayed to God to be with him, and ‘mercifully to look upon his infirmities, and in all dangers and necessities to stretch forth his right hand to help and defend him.’

Had Dick seen Basil thus kneel in prayer—had he seen the look of trustful determination that *beamed* in his face when he rose from his knees,

he would most likely for ever have given up the idea of influencing Basil for evil. But he did not see it, and therefore continued to try to carry out his evil plans; and poor Basil was brought into dangers and difficulties he little suspected; and Dick—Well! we must not say more about him now.

‘That is as much as I can read to you this morning, boys,’ said Miss Walton; ‘but you shall have your afternoon lesson at my house, and then I will go on. What follows won’t do for you to hear just before going into Church.’

As Miss Walton spoke, she rose to stop the lessons of the other classes, and prepare for Church. When she returned to her place, Fred had got her over-shoes ready for her to put on, and her umbrella brought out; and Alfred had possessed himself of her Bible and Prayer-Book, to carry them down to Church for her, which she always allowed some of the boys to do.

PART II.

As soon as the afternoon lesson was over, Miss Walton continued the story:—

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER II.—*Continued.*

When Basil reached the corner of the street, there stood Dick.

‘I hope you have not been long waiting,’ said Basil.

‘No, I only just got here,’ replied Dick; ‘but now come along, a party of us are going.’

Basil accompanied him down some little dirty streets, until they reached a small public-house, into which Dick entered.

‘I’ll wait for you here,’ said Basil, stopping at the door

‘Nonsense, come in,’ said Dick; ‘they may not be ready to start, and you’ll be tired of standing.’

‘No, I shan’t be tired; I had rather not come in; so don’t ask me,’ said Basil.

‘Don’t vex me, Basil,’ replied Dick; ‘I want you to come in, and see some of my friends.’

‘I am very sorry to vex you,’ said Basil, now really distressed; ‘but’—and here he hesitated, for he did not like to betray his real reason to Dick. He had promised his lost mother, only a few days before her death, that he would never sit down in a public-house unless he was obliged, and he feared to go in, lest he should be tempted.

‘But—what?’ said Dick, in a half-angry, half-persuasive tone. ‘Come in to please me, Basil.’

Basil did not answer for a moment, feeling puzzled between his promise to his mother, and his wish to oblige Dick, who had been so kind to him. At last he said, ‘I will go in with you, Dick, as you wish it, though I would much rather not; but only if you promise not to ask me to sit down, or stay long.’

‘No,’ said Dick, in a tone of triumph, ‘I’ll not ask you to sit down, and we shall only be there for a few minutes.’ And, as Basil followed him, he thought, ‘I knew I could make him do whatever I liked. I could make him sit down, if I chose; but I shan’t tease him about that.’

When they entered a little back room, only lighted by one small lamp hanging from the ceiling, the first person Basil saw was Crossman, sitting drinking, together with four or five boys, who called themselves men, about the same age as Dick.

‘Here you come, at last!’ were the words with which they greeted him, ‘and have brought your boy with you.’

‘Yes,’ answered Dick, with a meaning wink.

‘I am going to take him to see the wax-works; will you all come?’ At the same time he whispered in Crossman’s ear, ‘Some of them must come.’

‘Crossman seemed to be a leader among them, and as all turned an inquiring look towards him, he answered Dick, ‘Yes, we will some of us go. I’ve been; but Jack, Tom, and Bill, can go.’ Then turning towards Basil, he said, ‘Come, my boy, take a drink before you start,’ handing him a mug of beer.

Basil, however, answered civilly, yet decidedly, ‘No, thank you, I will not take any.’

Several of the young men laughed out, and jeeringly said, ‘Oh, you are modest, and want to be pressed. Come, sit down, and *do* take some.’

Basil, though a little boy, was not wanting in spirit, and the last few months had added considerably to his courage and decision of character. In reply to this, he turned to Dick, and said, ‘If you are not ready to go to the wax-works, I will walk on and wait there. I don’t intend to drink any thing, and I would rather not stay here.’

This was said in a tone of some annoyance. Dick, however, laughingly answered, ‘They shan’t tease you; wait, and I will come in a minute.’ He then eagerly whispered something to Crossman, and though the under conversation went on for some minutes, Basil could not hear a word. ‘Now I am ready,’ he said; ‘come along, Basil, and the rest of you.’

In the delights of all he saw, Basil forgot the scene in the tavern which had so much displeased him, and felt nothing but gratitude to Dick for treating him. Each thing that was shown seemed more wonderful to the eye of Basil than the former, and so completely was he wrapt up in all he saw, that he never noticed or heard the conversation that went on between Dick and his companions.

At length the show was over, and Basil followed them out of the room. As soon as ever they reached the street, Dick, drawing him to one side, said, 'Basil, I've just been doing a kindness for you; now I want you to do something for me.'

'Indeed, I shall be very glad, if I can; what is it?' replied Basil.

'We are going out to a house about a quarter of a mile from the town, and I'll tell you what I want as I go along. I can't stay now; they are all waiting for me.'

'But,' said Basil, 'it is late to-night; can't I do it in the morning?'

'No,' said Dick; 'now or never. Come along, and I'll tell you about it.'

Basil hesitated, and Dick seeing it, said, 'There now! you don't want to do it for me, I see. I thought you would have been glad to.'

'So I would,' said Basil, 'if I was only sure it was right; but we ought to go home.'

'If that is all,' said Dick, 'father gave me leave to stay out, and told me I might keep you. That's the reason he sent Bob with the shoes to Mr Harper's.'

This was entirely false, but poor Basil did not know it, and his mind being thus set at ease, he gladly consented to accompany Dick.

Again a triumphant smile passed over Dick's countenance, and he felt more sure of persuading Basil to anything.

They quickly joined their companions, and took their way out of the town, having met Crossman and the other youths according to the whispered appointment between Crossman and Dick.

Basil felt annoyed and suspicious when they were again joined by this party, and looked for Dick to tell him what they were going to do; but he was at *Crossman's* side, talking in an eager under-tone.

Basil every moment expected him to fulfil his promise, but in vain. At length he turned to the boy nearest to him, and asked if he knew what Dick wanted?

‘Nay, how should I know?’ was the cautious reply; ‘he is going to tell us all presently. Crossman and he asked us to come.’

Basil was then determined to wait no longer, and running up to Dick’s side, caught him by the arm, saying, ‘You promised to tell me what you wanted. I wish you would do so now.’

‘Don’t talk so loud, Basil; we are just at the house,’ said Dick.

‘Well! what of that?’ asked Basil, in surprise.

‘Oh! nothing, only you should not make a noise passing a house,’ replied Dick.

‘Well! but what do you want me to do?’ again demanded Basil. ‘I shall go back if you don’t tell me.’

‘That you won’t,’ muttered Crossman.

But Dick gave him a push, saying, ‘Do leave him to me.’

‘You’ll ruin us with that boy, I am sure,’ said Crossman.

‘I *won’t*, then; only let me manage him,’ again replied Dick.

It was only a word or two of this that Basil could hear, and then they stopped outside a high wall, just by a garden door. It was now between ten and eleven o’clock, and very dark, and all was still around them. Dick then, turning to Basil, said, ‘I want you to help me carry home some things I have got here.’

‘What *do* you mean?’ said Basil, a horrid suspicion crossing his mind that they were going to rob. ‘What *can* you have got here?’

The house where they now stood was inhabited by an old lady, her maid, and man-servant. She was

an old-fashioned person, and kept early hours. The household rose by daylight, and went to bed early. All was usually locked up by nine o'clock, and every body in bed by ten. By some unknown means Crossman had learned all this, and also that in a cupboard in one of the lower rooms, she kept a great quantity of silver. For many months he had set his heart upon this, and by various means had induced Dick and the other boys of the party to join him in trying to rob the old lady. All his plans were fixed, for he, Dick, and some of the others, had been about the house several nights making their observations.

To Basil's last question, Dick replied, 'Something that you shall share, if you'll do as you are bid.'

'I'll do nothing, unless I know what you are about,' replied Basil.

'Now, Basil, do be reasonable,' continued Dick. 'I can't explain quite everything to you: but the old lady who lives here is a nasty, stingy old woman, and she has got some silver which we are going to take and divide amongst us. She'll never miss it.'

'Going to steal!' said Basil. 'Dick! Dick! you have deceived me. I won't have anything to do with it.'

'Now, Basil, don't be unkind,' argued Dick. 'I have always been kind to you, don't refuse to help me now. You need not touch the things yourself; we only want you to creep into a little hole, we are all too big for that, and open the window.'

'I won't, indeed I won't. Oh! Dick, Dick, do come away. Don't do anything so wicked,' said Basil, with great earnestness.

'It isn't wicked, I tell you,' replied Dick; 'the old woman is very well off, and the loss of the silver won't hurt her. You shall share it, and be made so rich: only help, as we want you.'

While this argument went on between Dick and

Basil, one of the young men had climbed over the wall and opened the door. The party entered, all except those two, who continued to argue, Dick saying all he possibly could to persuade Basil, while Basil continued firmly to refuse.

At length Crossman, quite out of patience, joined them, and said, 'I knew how it would be; now you must leave him to me;' and putting his hand on Basil's mouth to prevent his speaking, he said, 'Now listen to me. You must and *shall* do as you are bid. You can't help yourself, for you are in my power, and if you say one word more, I'll knock you down;' and then he forcibly carried poor Basil into the garden, and up to the window where they intended to enter. Basil struggled, but all in vain. Crossman kept him in a tight grasp, still holding his hand over his mouth to prevent his speaking. He then in a low voice gave orders to the others to break the window, and cut a hole in the shutters, which they quietly did. Then speaking again to Basil, he said, 'Now, without a word, I expect you to creep in there and open the window for us. When I've put you in, why, if you don't do it, you'll be caught, or if you make a noise either, we will run and leave you to do the best you can, and you needn't expect anybody will believe a word you say, if you tell them you were forced; so I can tell you your only hope is to do it as quickly and quietly as you can.'

Having said this, he expected no more resistance, and somewhat loosened his hold of Basil. In an instant he jumped free, and with as much determination of manner as ever, answered, 'I will do nothing, and if you don't all stop, I'll make a noise and disturb the house.'

'You will, will you?' said Crossman, beside himself with passion; 'then take that;' and he gave him a blow that brought poor little Basil stunned to the ground.

What happened after this Basil did not know, for when he returned to consciousness, he was lying on his own bed, and Bob was sitting at his side. At first Basil could remember nothing; he jumped up and asked, 'Where am I?'

Bob answered quickly, 'Are you better at last? I am so glad; I thought you were going to die, and then what should I have done?' And the tears standing in his eyes, showed how much he feared to lose poor Basil.

'What is the matter?' asked Basil; 'how did I get here?'

Bob then told him that he had been brought there by two policemen a short time before, and that he had not been sensible since.

By degrees Basil remembered the scene he had lately witnessed, and anxiously asked, 'Where are they?'

'Oh!' said Bob, 'they are taken. I always told Dick not to go out robbing as he did night after night. Whenever he laid down in his clothes, he used to get up and go out late with Crossman.'

'Oh!' said Basil, 'I often wondered why he did that, but I never supposed he went out. But tell me, Bob, how were they taken?'

'Some men in the room were watching for them. The man-servant had seen 'em about the house very often, and began to suspect, and for a night or two he and several policemen had been watching.'

'Did they get in, then?' anxiously inquired Basil.

'Oh! yes, and I think I heard father say they managed to unlock the window from the outside when you would not get in, and Dick and Crossman both were inside, when they were seized, after just putting some spoons into their pockets, which lay

on the table : father says he supposes they were put there on purpose.'

'Did the others escape?' again asked Basil, his flushed face and eager manner showing how excited he was.

'No, they are all taken, I believe;' answered Bob. 'But do tell me how you came to be there.'

'First tell me how they knew I did not help,' said Basil.

'The men, outside, behind some bushes, heard all that passed.'

'But oh!' said Basil, the tears running down his cheeks, 'what will become of Dick?'

Bob made no answer to this, for he could not bear to speak of it. He struggled against his tears, and then asked Basil again, to tell him how he came to be there.

As soon as he could speak, he began and gave a straightforward account up to the moment when he was knocked down; while he spoke, his cheeks burned, and his eyes looked very bright. Bob listened, and replied, 'Oh, how brave you were! I never could have done so;' and covering his face with his hands, he burst into tears, and continued: 'I wish I was like you. I wish I was as good as you are.'

'Indeed, you are very good; don't cry, please don't cry so. I am sure you would not have stolen,' pleaded Basil.

'Oh no, I would not have stolen; I don't know quite why, but I never would when Dick used to ask me; and I sometimes used to threaten to tell father of his going out at night, and then I did not like to; and I often wished you had heard them go out at night, and then I thought I would talk to you about it. Ah, how I wish now I had told! perhaps he would then never have been in jail?' and again Bob's tears flowed fast, and poor Basil cried too. At this moment Mrs Hardman entered,

followed by the doctor, who had been sent for, on Basil's being brought home insensible.

The moment he approached the bed, he saw that Basil was in a burning fever, occasioned by the excitement he had gone through, and the blow he had received. The doctor ordered what was necessary for him, and desired that he might be kept perfectly quiet. Bob, having promised not to talk to him, was allowed still to sit at his bed-side; and the doctor said he would call again in the morning.

All night long Basil tossed about, soon becoming quite delirious. Bob sat by his side, anxiously watching him, his fears having again returned that Basil would die; and when he looked back upon the last few months, he could not bear to think of it, for he had learned to love Basil very much for his gentle kindness, and even for the few words of advice or reproof which he had given him.

As he sat thus, looking at poor Basil tossing from side to side, and perhaps likely soon to die, a thought came into his mind, he knew not how, that *he* should have to die some day, and then what would become of him? He shuddered at the idea. All his many faults came before him, and most clearly those that Basil had told him of. He remembered wrong things that he had not thought of before, since he had committed them. The great sin of his neglect of daily prayer, and his neglect of Church, forced itself upon him. And then he remembered how regularly Basil said his prayers, and how little regard he had paid to all their taunts when he first came among them. Then the kind words Basil had said to him about saying his prayers came into his mind, and his own cowardice in being afraid of kneeling and so contenting himself with saying them after he got into bed, which very often he was too sleepy to do. And now as he sat trembling at the *thought* of death, the words of the evening prayer

which Basil had copied out for him, came into his mind, and, sinking down upon his knees, he repeated them with real earnestness.

Yes, poor Bob, wild, thoughtless, but good-natured Bob, was really on his knees, in deep, sincere prayer, while he who had been the almost unconscious means of bringing him to it, knew not what was passing. After much tossing he had fallen into an unquiet sleep, sadly disturbed by distorted visions of the scenes he had so lately passed through.

Mr Walton entering the room, stopped Miss Walton's proceeding. 'It is quite time for the boys to go,' he said; 'we want our tea now.'

While Miss Walton had been reading, you might almost have heard a pin drop; and when she stopped, many of the boys turned their heads away, to hide their tears.

When Miss Walton said, 'Yes, boys, you must go now,' they rose without a word, and making their usual bows at the door, left the room.

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany.

COLLECT.

O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Miss Walton. We spoke last Sunday of dangers both of our—?

‘Souls and bodies,’ said several.

Miss W. And we prayed God to defend us in our dangers. Do we ask the same thing to-day?

Edward. Yes; ‘grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations.’

Miss W. What do we want protection for?

Several. To support us in all dangers.

Miss W. Yes, such dangers as we spoke of last Sunday. To-day we may confine ourselves to one particular sort of dangers, those of the soul. What does God know us ‘to be set in the midst of?’

Alfred. ‘Many and great dangers.’

Miss W. Yes, and that ‘by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot’—?

‘Always stand upright,’ the boys continued.

Miss W. We don’t stand upright because we are—what?

All. Frail.

Miss W. Yes, and are set—?

‘In the midst of dangers,’ they answered again.

Miss W. What is meant by not standing upright

Fred. Falling into sin.

Miss W. We fall into sin because we are frail and are set—?

‘In the midst of dangers,’ said several.

Miss W. I say we fall into SIN. What is, the one of our chief dangers?

Several. The danger of falling into sin.

Miss W. Is this a danger to our souls or bodies

All. Our souls.

Miss W. Yes, more especially to our souls. In the general confession we mention two sorts of sin. What are they?

Andrew. ‘We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.’

Miss W. We speak there of *actual* sin. We have done—?

‘Those things which we ought not to have done,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes, and we speak of duties omitted. ‘We have left’—?

‘Undone those things which we ought to have done,’ again they replied.

Miss W. We are in ‘danger’ then of—what?

Edward. Of committing actual sin, and of omitting duties.

Miss W. Yes, and these are ‘dangers’ to—?

‘Our souls,’ replied Alfred.

Miss W. And what makes us fall?

Charley. The frailty of our nature.

Miss W. What does frailty mean?

Francis. Weakness.

Miss W. That is right. Why cannot a little infant stand or walk when it is first born?

‘Because it is so weak,’ said Charley, smiling at the idea of an infant walking.

Miss W. Yes, weak or frail, and we say that our nature is frail—What nature is it?

Fran. Human nature.

Miss W. What does the Catechism teach us that we are, by nature?

Andrew. ‘Born in sin, and the children of wrath.’

Miss W. Yes, and although by holy Baptism we are born again, and made—?

‘The children of God,’ said Samuel.

‘Still our nature,’ Miss Walton continued, ‘remains frail and inclined to evil. What did our blessed Saviour say to His disciples when He found them asleep during His agony?’

George. ‘Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ (St. Matt. xxvi. 41.)

Miss W. And who can say the sixth verse of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah?

‘I can,’ said James. ‘*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.*’

Miss W. Our natures, then, being ‘frail,’ we cannot ‘always stand upright.’ You will best understand this, by giving me some examples. The Gospel will first furnish us with one. What do we read that Jesus entered into?

Henry. A ship.

Miss W. And what arose?

Edgar. A great tempest.

Miss W. Yes, the wind blew hard, and the waves tossed about. Have any of you seen the sea?

‘I have,’ said Francis.

Miss W. But no one else? And did you ever see it when the wind blew very hard?

‘Once I did,’ he replied, ‘and the waves were very high, and the ships tossed about, like a cork on pond.’

Miss W. I dare say they did. I have seen the waves twenty or thirty feet high, rising up with swell, and dashing down again.

‘That would be higher than a man,’ said Fred.

Miss W. Yes, Fred, more likely as high as a house. Well, fancy such a storm as this, and the waves breaking over the ship.

‘Surely, the ships must sink,’ said Charley.

‘Sometimes they do,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘especially if the waves damage a ship and the water gets in; then when it is full it sinks.’

‘Oh, how dreadful it must be!’ cried several.

Miss W. Yes, but if the water does not get into the ship, it will rise and float on the top of the waves. What do we now read about the ship in the Gospel?

All. That it was covered with the waves.

Miss W. And where was Jesus?

James. Asleep in the ship.

Miss W. His disciples awoke Him, saying—?

David. ‘Save, Lord, we perish.’

Miss W. And what did He answer?

Andrew. ‘Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith!’

Miss W. What reason could they have had for not being afraid when the storm was so great? What was with them in the ship?

Charley. Jesus.

Miss W. Need they then have feared? Look at the whole chapter, and then tell me how many miracles Jesus had just been performing in their sight?

‘Three,’ said Edward; ‘healing the leper, curing the centurion’s servant, and St. Peter’s wife’s mother-in-law.’

Miss W. Very well; after such proofs of His power, need they have doubted?

All. No.

Miss W. Certainly not, it was want of faith which made them doubt, and He rebuked them, though kindly, by saying—?

‘Why are ye fearful, *O ye of little faith,*’ continued Alfred.

Miss W. I said they were an example to us of the frailty of our nature. In what way?

‘By being afraid,’ replied Edward.

Miss W. Yes, by want of—?

‘Faith,’ said Francis.

Miss W. How did Jesus take pity on their frailty?

Edward. He rebuked the sea, and there was a great calm.

Miss W. In this act, what did He manifest? Instead of being angry with His disciples’ want of faith, He listened to their prayer, and helped them. What did He show?

‘How kind he was,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes. He manifested His kindness, and also His power over—what?

Francis. The wind and the sea.

‘Yes,’ Miss Walton continued, ‘they obey Him. And afterwards, in expelling the evil spirits, He again manifested—what?’

‘His power,’ said Edward.

Miss W. To-day, then, we may say, that He manifested His kindness, and His authority over nature, and the powers of evil. Now, I want you to give me another example of the frailty of our nature. We have one among the apostles themselves. Which of them was it that fell into such grievous sin?

Fred. Judas Iscariot.

Miss W. His was, indeed, an awful fall; but it proceeded from something more than frailty.

‘St. Peter fell,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. When?

Alfred. When he denied his Lord.

Miss W. Yet, when he was warned, do you remember what he answered?

George. 'Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.' (St. Matthew, xxvi. 35.)

Miss W. Do you think St. Peter was really in earnest when he said this?

Francis. Yes, ma'am; was he not?

Miss W. No doubt he was, Francis; he really thought himself able to die for his Lord, for the love he bore unto Him. Yet, when the temptation came, what did he do?

Edward. He fell, and denied Jesus three times.

Miss W. What made him fall?

Charley. His weakness.

Miss W. Did he know his own weakness or 'frailty' before?

Francis. Not when he said so positively that he would die for Jesus.

Miss W. Of what, then, is he an example to us?

Edward. The frailty of our nature.

Miss W. Yes, remember that to be acquainted with our own weakness, and distrust ourselves, is one great help towards standing. What then do we pray God to do, since we cannot stand upright?

Samuel. To help us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations.

Miss W. How was it that St. Peter, after such a fall, ever rose again?

Francis. He repented.

Miss W. Do you remember what brought him to repentance?

George. The cock crew, and Jesus turned and looked upon him.

'And then he went out, and wept bitterly,' continued Charley.

Miss W. That is right; and do you remember what our Saviour said He had done for St. Peter

when He warned him of his fall? ‘Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat’—

‘But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,’ continued Edward.

Miss W. Jesus prayed for him, and in great mercy suffered him not wholly to sink under the weight of his sin, because he fell, not from a wilful choice of evil, but from the ‘frailty’ of his nature. But we mean something more than this when we pray that we may be ‘carried through temptation.’ What do we say about dangers at the beginning of the Collect?

Francis. That we are set in the midst of them.

Miss W. Yes, they surround us on all sides, and we are frail, and if left to ourselves must fall; but are we left to ourselves?

Edward. No, God will support us.

Miss W. What will God give us to enable us to stand upright? We pray Him to grant us—what?

Alfred. ‘Strength and’—

‘That will do; “strength” is the word I want now,’ said Miss Walton. ‘God will strengthen us. We are frail in ourselves; we may be strong in’—?

‘The Lord,’ said Francis.

Miss W. And although we, on account of our frailty, cannot of ourselves pass through temptations without falling, yet God’s strength will do—what for us?

Edward. ‘Carry us through all temptations.’

Miss W. And if *He* carries us through, shall we fall?

Francis. No; then we shall ‘stand upright.’

Miss W. Yes, notwithstanding our own frail nature. In our own weakness we fall, but being ‘strong in the Lord,’ we conquer. You say St. Peter fell because he did not know his own—?

‘Frailty,’ replied Charley.

Miss W. He thought himself strong enough to stand upright, and therefore he—?

‘Fell,’ said several.

Miss W. But Christ in mercy gave him strength to repent and —?

‘Rise up again,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes; now give me an example of one who, being tempted, did *not fall and rise again*, but by the strength of God stood upright. Who was tempted by his master’s wife?

George. Joseph.

Miss W. Did he yield to the temptation?

Several. No.

Miss W. What did he answer?

David. ‘How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God.’ (Gen. xxxix. 9.)

Miss W. Who, are we told, was with Joseph?

All. God.

Miss W. Yes, in the strength of God he stood upright under severe temptations. Did they then hurt him?

Several. No, ma’am.

Miss W. Why not?

Edward. Because he stood upright.

Miss W. Exactly; they hurt him not, because he had strength to resist them. Temptations only hurt us when we yield to them. Is this the strength we pray for in the Collect?

Edward. Yes, ‘such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations.’

Miss W. Carry us through unhurt. Temptations we must have, because we are ‘set in the midst’ of them, but by the ‘strength’ and ‘protection’ of God we may remain ‘upright,’ and unhurt. Let us see, boys, how we can make this useful to you. Can you tell me any of the temptations you are set in the midst of? Do you think that you are

surrounded by the same kind as Lord Norgrove?

‘I should think not,’ said Francis.

Miss W. No, I don’t think you are. But cannot you tell me what particular temptations *do* surround you, boys? You ought surely to be better able to tell *me*, than I to tell *you*.

‘No, ma’am,’ said Charley; ‘I am sure we arn’t.’

Miss W. Well, then, listen to me, and perhaps I can help you to tell me. Where were three or four of you, boys, during service last Friday?

‘Please, ma’am,’ said Francis, ‘we were up in town.’

Miss W. And what prevented your leaving town and coming down to Church?

‘Please, ma’am, we didn’t like to—Dick and Jim would have laughed at us,’ said Francis again.

Miss W. And do you, George, and you, Edward, give the same reason?

Their downcast looks answered ‘yes,’ though they did not honestly confess it in words as Francis did.

‘I see that was your reason too,’ said Miss Walton, ‘It was false shame that kept you—you didn’t like—and a fear of being laughed at. You were ashamed of doing right, and you were afraid of being laughed at. Oh! what cowards you all are! However, boys, I don’t want to scold you about it now. I only remind you of it as an example of one of the many temptations which surround you; and I think it is one which you, boys, find it most difficult to withstand. You do wrong from a fear of ridicule, or a feeling of shame, at the idea of being thought more religious than your companions. Is it not so?’

‘Yes, ma’am,’ said Francis, ‘if we say anything about doing right, people laugh at us; and we don’t like that.’

Miss W. No, it is not pleasant; but is it not better to be laughed at than to do wrong?

‘Basil thought so,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, and I hope some of you do also. Indeed, I have been much pleased to see you often leave your companions and run down to church regardless of their laugh. But at other times false shame, or the fear of ridicule, tempts you to sin. Why do you go with those who laugh at you?

‘Please, ma’am,’ said Edward, ‘we can’t help it; we are obliged to work with them.’

‘And sometimes to live with them,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Exactly so; you cannot help it, because you are ‘set in the midst of dangers.’ But is it that you may fall?

‘No, ma’am,’ said Charley, ‘we need not mind being laughed at. I am sure Edward didn’t mind it when he worked in the brick-yard, and they used to drink ‘*just about*,’ and laugh at him for not doing the same.’

‘I am glad to hear he did not,’ said Miss Walton, looking towards him with approbation. ‘You none of you need fall, if you seek strength from God to carry you through the temptations that surround you. And now, Charley, why had I to tell you three times this morning to come into school?’

‘Because I was sliding,’ he answered, ‘and didn’t like to leave.’

Miss W. The love of pleasure, *that* made you do wrong. This is a very common temptation; but let us rather speak now of evil example. Supposing you see your elders doing wrong, are you inclined to follow them?

Alfred. Sometimes we are.

Miss W. And supposing they praise you, and call you manly for doing as they do, don’t you like it?

‘Yes, ma’am, we do,’ said Fred.

Miss W. I believe you do: the example of others will tempt you to sin, and the love of praise or applause will encourage you to go on; one particular

instance of this you shall give me. 'Do you not sometimes see young men teaze each other until they get angry?

Sam. Yes, often.

Miss W. And then what do you boys, who are standing by, begin to do to each other?

'We do the same—teaze each other,' said Fred.

Miss W. Sometimes your teasing is taken good-temperedly, sometimes it vexes. Let us now suppose you are teasing a boy in the midst of your companions, and they all laugh and encourage you, and call you clever, and say, 'that is capital,' and he gets vexed; do you stop when you see it?

'Not always,' said Charley.

Miss W. Not always, I am afraid; you like to be praised, and therefore you are tempted to go on, though your companion is vexed. How would this probably end?

'In a fight,' replied Edward.

Miss W. And what would those about you still continue to do?

'To cheer us on,' said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, probably they would; and you would first have followed bad example, and then gone on in sin, from the love of applause. But, boys, if you speak honestly, could you say that this was right?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. And would you know it to be wrong at the time?

Several. Yes, ma'am, but we should not remember it while we were fighting?

Miss W. Perhaps you would not, but your conscience does tell you at the beginning. Now this, and temptations like this, surround you, boys, and you are frail, and find it hard to 'stand upright.' Yet you can if you really wish to, and seek strength from God. If you are confident in your own strength, like—whom?

Several. St. Peter.

Miss W. Yes, if you are confident like him, you will fall, but if you know yourselves to be weak, and pray to God to carry you safely through the temptations that surround you, you will conquer. Some of you I think do this, and then you come out from temptation, like Joseph, unhurt. I wish I could think you all did.

‘Mr Walton and I are going to take a walk, children,’ said Miss Walton, as she left church after morning service; ‘any of you who like may come.’

‘That’s right!’ resounded from the group which stood round her as she spoke, and in a moment after, they were running before Mr and Miss Walton in high spirits. The day was lovely, the sun was shining brightly, yet the ground still hard with the frost, and the grass in the shade still crisp to the feet. The children, like all children, found particular delight in walking on the grass, fancying, and enjoying the fancy, that they could hear a crackling sound as the frost-encrusted blades bent beneath their tread.

Mr Walton and his sister walked briskly to get warm, and the children, running and jumping, were happy in the consciousness of their presence, although they did not take much notice of them.

On their return Mr Walton went into a cottage to see a sick woman, and Miss Walton said she would go and speak to Mrs Coote; for Edward and Charley’s father had married again a few weeks before, and Miss Walton had not seen Mrs Coote. Charley followed her, but the rest remained outside.

Miss Walton, after asking Mrs Coote how she liked the place, and various things respecting herself, said she hoped the children were good and obedient.

‘Why, ma’am,’ answered Mrs Coote, ‘there isn’t much to complain of in Edward and Fanny, but Charley there, and Jane, give me plenty of trouble.’

‘Indeed,’ said Miss Walton, ‘I am sorry to hear that; and especially sorry to hear it of you, Charley,’ she said, turning to him. ‘How does he give you trouble, Mrs Coote?’

‘Why, please ma’am, I did say I would tell you, he is so idle’ (meaning troublesome): ‘if I send him a message I never know when to expect him back, he does stay and play so long; and then if I say any thing to him, likely enough he is saucy. It was only yesterday I sent him for a bit of tea, and if it was not a good hour and a half before he came back, and when I scolded him I got nothing but sauce. And it is very seldom we can have a bit of quiet when he is in the house, *he does drive such work.*’

‘This is a sad account,’ said Miss Walton, gravely: ‘I know Charley’s nonsense often leads him to do wrong, and *he* knows very well how naughty it is to carry it thus far.’

‘I told him, ma’am, I should tell you; for I don’t know what to do with him, and I told him you would be *just about* angry,’ continued Mrs Coote.

‘I am angry, and very much grieved, Charley,’ said Miss Walton, turning to him as he stood by her side; ‘I have so very often told you that it is no use being a good boy at school, if you are naughty at home, and I have told you how very wrong it is to indulge your nonsense, and “drive work” (as you call it) at improper times.’

Any sort of play or nonsense was called ‘driving work’ at Forley, especially play and noise at improper times, or places. If the children were naughty at Church, or if they were noisy in the street, Miss Walton was told that they had been “driving work,” and she sometimes found it useful to use their own terms.

When Miss Walton spoke to Charley, he looked very much ashamed, and gave an angry glance at his mother for telling. Miss Walton noticed this, and

said, 'Charley, go out of the room, I shall come and speak to you presently.'

He instantly obeyed; and then Miss Walton talked to Mrs Coote about his peculiar disposition, which, she said, 'You must try, Mrs Coote, to make allowances for. I am sure it is much more difficult for him to be steady than for Edward, for he is naturally of much higher spirits. I don't mean to excuse him for what he has done wrong; I think he has been very much to blame; but it is more your business to punish him than mine. Next time he stays out, you must punish him instead of scolding him, and I think you will find that it will do him good; for though he is what you call "idle," I believe he tries, on the whole, to be a good boy.'

To this Mrs Coote agreed, saying, 'Why, he isn't, perhaps, quite a bad boy; he won't tell lies, or steal, or anything the like of that, only he is so *idle*. But I'll do as you say, ma'am; and perhaps he'll mend, particularly if you'll speak to him.'

Miss Walton then bidding Mrs Coote good morning, left the house, and found Charley in the garden waiting for her. He still looked ashamed, but not sorry.

'Charley,' said Miss Walton, 'what a sad account I have heard of you! how very naughty you have been! You know it is very naughty to stay when you are sent a message, and still worse to be saucy when your mother speaks to you. Indeed, Charley, I can have nothing more to do with you if you are a naughty boy at home. You know I never will have anything to do with naughty boys.'

Charley answered in a half-repentant, half-indifferent manner, 'Yes, you *have something* to do with them; you punish them.'

'Yes, Charley, I punish them,' continued Miss Walton, 'if I think it will do them good, but I cannot love them, or show them kindness, unless they

really sorry for what they have done wrong. you sorry, Charley?' But Charley did not answer, and Miss Walton continued, 'Charley, you naughty, and are not sorry; I cannot therefore allow you to be with me; you must not walk up the hill now, but stay and think about your faults, when you are really sorry you may come and see.' Having said this, she opened the gate and entered the garden. In a moment she saw that Charley was following her, certainly looking very unhappy. She turned quickly to him, and said, 'Charley, I don't want your coming. I shall not talk to you any more now. If you are sorry, show it by doing as we are bid;' then joining Mr Walton, who was coming out of the other cottage, she took his arm, and proceeded homewards.

Charley, however, was in one of his perverse moods, either thinking, or pretending to think, that

Miss Walton was not in earnest, and when she had gone back, she saw he was still following at a distance.

She stopped, and said to her brother, 'Charley has been naughty, and I have forbidden him to come up the hill with us, but he has taken advantage of his perverse fits, and is, I see, still coming; now, please, go back, and send him home?'

Mr Walton did so, but even he had great difficulty in convincing him that they were in earnest. At length, however, he succeeded, and Charley went slowly home.

The rest of the children followed up the hill, and Mr Walton and his sister turned into their gate. When Fred ran forward, and held open for them, before they separated for their respective homes.

'I cannot teach you this afternoon, boys,' said Miss Walton, just as she entered the gate; 'you elder boys must employ yourselves, and the younger boys will be in the second class.'

‘Please, ma’am, are we not to hear any of Basil to-day?’ asked Alfred.

‘No, not to-day; I am going away, and shall not be back until Church-time,’ answered Miss Walton. ‘You must wait patiently until next Sunday.’

As Miss Walton did not teach her class that afternoon, she saw no more of Charley until evening Church; but she felt very unhappy about him, for she began to fear that he could not really be trying to do right, especially as he had not seemed penitent. She hoped, however, that he would think over his faults, and thus be led to sorrow.

Let me here say a few words to any of my readers who are boys in a Sunday-school, and ask them if they ever think of the pain their misconduct gives to their teachers. They grieve over your faults, boys; for those who teach you Sunday after Sunday learn to love you, and it is their greatest joy to see you steadily and perseveringly doing right, and very great and bitter pain it gives them to see you do wrong and be impenitent. Take care, therefore, not to grieve your teachers by your faults, but show your gratitude and love by doing every thing you can to please them. It will be better both for yourself and your teacher.

Miss Walton, I said, was unhappy, and she looked round for Charley as she took her seat among the children that evening in the Church. Presently he entered, and the first glance showed he had been crying very much. He took his seat, and hardly raised his eyes during the service. Once he caught Miss Walton’s eye, as she looked at him when Mr Walton was saying something in his sermon about the frailty of our nature, and instantly his scarcely pent-up tears began to flow afresh.

The moment they were outside the Church door, Charley crept up to her side, and said, in a gentle

tone, 'Please, ma'am, you will not think anything more about *that*, will you?'

'I will speak to you in a minute,' said Miss Walton, kindly; and then turning to the other children, she bade them go with Mr Walton, and asked him to walk on before her. When outside the Church-yard, she called Charley, and said, 'What do you want to say to me?'

'Please, ma'am,' he said, sobbing, 'I am very sorry.'

'Have you been thinking about your faults, Charley?' she asked.

'Yes, ma'am,' he replied, 'I have been thinking about them ever since. I am so unhappy.'

'Tell me, Charley,' said Miss Walton, 'what kept you last time your mother sent you a message?'

'I got talking to Fred,' he replied, 'and I knew I ought not to stay, and yet I did; and when mother scolded me, then I said I didn't care, but I *did* care all the time;' and here Charley sobbed again.

He and Miss Walton were a good deal behind the rest of the congregation, and it was dark, so that no one saw poor Charley's tears.

'And what sort of *work do you drive*, which makes your mother angry?' asked Miss Walton.

'Oh! I make a noise and dance about,' he answered, 'and sing songs; but is that wrong?'

'Not wrong always, Charley, but wrong when you are told to be quiet. Have I not often said this before?'

'Yes, ma'am, but I forget at the time; I will not forget any more.'

'I am afraid you will, Charley,' returned Miss Walton, 'you are often so heedless. Unless you do something to make you remember this, you will forget all about it when the next temptation comes; for your nature is frail, Charley, and you cannot of

yourself stand upright. Think now, seriously, what sad faults your love of pleasure has led you to. What did we say the other Sunday about being unfaithful in our work?

‘You said we were unfaithful if we did not do it as well as we could,’ he answered.

‘Then when you are sent on an errand how ought you to do it?’

‘Quickly, I suppose,’ he replied.

‘Then in playing and loitering you have been—what, Charley?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘Unfaithful,’ he said.

‘And unfaithful only to your mother?’ Miss Walton said.

‘No, to God also,’ he whispered.

‘Yes, Charley, and when you reached home, what was your next fault?’

‘I was saucy to mother,’ he replied.

Miss W. Which commandment did you then break?

‘The fifth: “honour thy father and thy mother,”’ he answered.

‘Again: was this fault only against your mother?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘No, against God too,’ he replied.

Miss Walton continued. ‘And this is not all: when she told me of it, what did you feel?’

‘I was angry,’ he said.

‘Yes,’ returned Miss Walton, ‘I saw that you were angry, and you were proud also; and all the time I spoke to you in the garden you were proud, and would not acknowledge that you had done wrong; and then you were disobedient to me three times, Charley.’

‘Oh! I have been very, very naughty; what must I do?’ he sobbed. ‘Will God forgive me?’

‘Will your mother forgive you, Charley?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘I don’t know,’ he said, ‘I never thought of that.’

‘But, Charley, you must think about it: you have sinned against her very deeply, and you must confess it, and ask her to forgive you.’

‘Oh! I can’t do that,’ he said, ‘I can ask you to forgive me, but I can’t ask her.’

‘It is not me that you have sinned against,’ said Miss Walton, ‘it is your mother; and if you do not tell her that you are sorry, and ask her forgiveness, you cannot hope that God will pardon you. I know it is very hard, Charley, but if you are really sorry you will do it; and then, I think, you will not so soon forget again. It will help you to be more watchful. Don’t you think it will?’

‘Oh! I shall never forget how unhappy I have been,’ he replied.

‘Yes, Charley, I am afraid you will,’ returned Miss Walton, ‘unless you force yourself to do the only thing you can do now to make up for your carelessness and sauciness.’

‘And will God then forgive me?’ he earnestly inquired.

‘Yes, my boy,’ replied Miss Walton, ‘He will forgive you if you are really sorry, as He forgave St. Peter, after he had fallen into sin, when he went out and wept bitterly.’

For a few moments Charley was silent, and Miss Walton did not speak either, at length he said, in a determined manner, ‘Yes, I will tell her.’

Miss Walton stopped, and laying her hand upon his shoulder, said, ‘God bless you, my boy, I am glad to see you are brave; and remember when you have done this, that you earnestly ask God to forgive you for Christ’s sake, and pray to Him to grant you “such strength and protection” as may “carry you through” all future “temptations.” You must not trust in your own strength, my boy, but pray to God for help; at the same time you must also watch your-

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settle and check your spirits before they get too high. Will you do this?

‘Indeed, indeed, ma’am, I will try,’ he answered, with earnestness.

‘Go then, Charley, and see your mother as soon as you can, before your courage fails,’ said Miss Walton.

With a much lighter heart he turned down the hill again. He had no chance of speaking to his mother that evening, which was a great trial to his resolution, but he did not forget to confess his faults to his Father in heaven ere he laid down to rest. Next morning, when alone with his mother, he told her how sorry he was for his idleness, and for having been saucy to her, and promised her to try and do better.

Many months afterwards, when Miss Walton met Mrs Coote, and inquired of her whether Charley was a good boy, she answered, ‘Why, yes, ma’am, I can’t say much against him now; he’s never been the same since you talked to him, and he promised me to do better. He is a strange boy. He still likes play, and sometimes *drives work*; but I haven’t much to say against him now.’

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany.
COLLECT.

O Lord, we beseech Thee to keep Thy Church and household continually in Thy true religion; that they who do lean only upon the hope of Thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by Thy mighty power; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Miss W. What is that new building at Motley, boys?

All. A Church.

Miss W. What is it made of?

All. Stone and wood.

Miss W. Is this the sort of Church we mean in the Collect?

Edgar and some of the careless ones answered 'Yes,' but Edward and one or two others answered 'No.'

'How can some of you boys be so careless?' said Miss Walton. 'You certainly answered "Yes," because you were not thinking. Edgar, say the beginning of the Collect, and tell me again whether it means a stone building.'

Edgar. 'O Lord, we beseech Thee to keep Thy Church and household continually in Thy true religion.'

Miss W. Let us now see what the Collect does mean, since you all agree that it cannot be a stone building we speak of. Of whom do you say you are made members in the beginning of the Catechism?

Fred. Members of Christ.

Miss W. What is Jesus Christ the Head of?

Edward. The Church.

Miss W. Look at Col. i. 18.

James. 'And He is the Head of the body, the Church.

Miss W. Look at the 13th verse, and you will see who is meant by 'He.'

Alfred. God the Son.

Miss W. Very well; Christ is the Head of the Church, or—? What is said besides the Church?

Francis. The Body.

Miss W. Yes, and you say that we are members of Christ. What is a member?

All. Part of a Body.

Miss W. Then whose Body are we parts of?

Several. The Body of Christ.

Miss W. When we say, then, that we are made members of Christ, we mean members of His—?

'Body,' said several.

Miss W. And what does St. Paul call His Body?

Several. The Church.

Miss W. Now we have come to see that the Church means something besides a building of stone. What is it?

Edward. The Body of Christ.

Miss W. And what makes up the Body?

Francis. The head and the members.

Miss W. And Christ is the Head of the Church. Who are the members?

Francis. All who are baptized.

Miss W. Yes, for by Holy Baptism we are made members of Christ. Then does one person alone make the Church?

Edward. No, a number together.

Miss W. You would not say that your arm alone was your body, or your hand alone, would you?

Fred. No, they are only members.

Miss W. But what do your head and all your members together make?

Our body,' said several.

Miss W. So it is with the Church; it is made up of many members, yet there is but one—what?

'Body,' said George. (See 1 Cor. xii. 20.)

Miss W. To make this plainer, you shall have an example from what you see and hear every day. George, where are you now being taught?

'In the school,' he answered.

Miss W. Where does the school sit in Church?

Several. In the gallery.

Miss W. Do you mean the building sits there?

All. No; the children.

Miss W. Of course. The children, then, make the—?

'School,' said several.

Miss W. But do you, Charley, alone, or you, David, alone, make the school?

Several. No, but all of us together.

Miss W. Exactly. All together you make—?

All. The school.

Miss W. Sometimes, then, the school means the—?

'Building,' they answered.

Miss W. And sometimes—?

'The children altogether,' they again replied.

Miss W. So it is with the Church. Sometimes it means only the building, sometimes the whole Body, made up of many members, of which Christ is the head. We pray in the Collect for God's Church—?

Andrew. Household.

Miss W. The members of the Church are God's household. You will find St. Paul speaking in the same way in Eph. ii. 19.

Samuel. 'Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.'

Miss W. Who is the Father of the household?

Charley. Almighty God.

Miss W. Yes, because when we are born into the 'congregation of Christ's flock,' we are made—what?

All. The children of God.

Miss W. Yes, being new born into the Church, we are the children of God's household, and He is the Head. We become, as it were, one large family. What do we pray for God's Church and household?

Edward. That God would keep it continually in His true religion.

Miss W. Let us now see what true religion is. It is difficult to explain it to you, boys, so you must be very attentive while I try. I will now tell you, and *you* must afterwards explain it to me. We may say, then, that religion consists in belief, obedience, and worship. But we pray that the Church may be kept in what sort of religion?

Francis. True religion.

Miss W. Then there may be a false religion. What would make religion false? If people believe what is not—?

'True,' said several.

Miss W. Yes, or obeyed wrong—?

'Commands,' said Fred.

'Or,' *Miss Walton* continued, 'worshipped in a wrong way, or worshipped false—?'

'Gods,' said several.

Miss W. The heathens have a religion, but is it a 'true' one?

All. No, false.

Miss W. Now, in the Collect, whose religion do we speak of?

Alfred. 'Thy true religion.'

Miss W. That is the 'true religion' of—?

'God,' said Andrew.

'The religion, then, that God teaches us, is—what?' asked *Miss Walton*.

‘True religion,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Now you tell me what I said religion consisted of?

‘Belief, obedience, and worship,’ said several.

Miss W. Turn to the second chapter of the Acts, and you will there see a picture of true religion. Read the 42nd verse.

Samuel. ‘And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.’

Miss W. Let us see now whether belief, obedience, and worship, are contained in this account of the religion of the early Church. What are we first told the converts continued in?

George. The Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship.

Miss W. What does doctrine here mean? What had the Apostles been doing?

Henry. Preaching.

Miss W. Or teaching. The Apostles’ doctrine, then, means their—?

‘Teaching,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Now, what had the Apostles been teaching?

‘That the people were to believe on Jesus,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, that was one thing which they had taught the people—what they were to believe. Is that one part of religion?

Several. Yes, belief.

Miss W. The people then asked, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we *do*?’ Did the Apostles tell them?

Francis. Yes, they told them to repent and be baptized.

‘And afterwards we are told,’ said Miss Walton, that with many other words they testified and exhorted, saying, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” In their doctrine, then, they taught them not only what they were to *believe*, but what they were—?’

‘To *do*,’ said Charley.

Miss W. One thing which you say they were to do, was to be baptized; into whose fellowship did that admit them?

Fred. Into the Apostles’ fellowship.

Miss W. It admitted them into their society. You know what a club is, don’t you?

All. Yes, ma’am.

Miss W. When you belong to a club, you have fellowship with the other members; and what do you submit to?

Edward. The rules of the society.

Miss W. Do you bind yourself to obey them when you enter the club?

Several. Yes, ma’am, we do.

Miss W. And what at Holy Baptism do people bind themselves to do? Mind, I say *do*, not believe, or renounce.

Francis. To keep God’s holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life.

Miss W. Very well; and when we are told that the converts continued in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, it shows that they continued to *believe* and—?

‘Do what they were taught,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Give me the right word for doing as they were taught?

Francis. Obedience.

Miss W. Is that part of religion?

Fred. Yes, the second you mentioned.

Miss W. The Apostles taught them what they were to believe, and what they were to do, and the converts, by continuing in their doctrine and fellowship, continued in faith and obedience. What else besides doctrine and fellowship did the converts continue in?

Several. Breaking of bread and in prayers.

Miss W. This was of course in fellowship with the Apostles. Does this contain the third part of religion?

‘Yes, worship,’ said Edward.

Miss W. But I said we should here have a picture of *true* religion. Now religion to be true must come from—whom?

George. From God.

Miss W. Who had appointed the Apostles to teach?

David. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. When did He commission them?

George. Just before His ascension. ‘Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’—and, ‘lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.’ (St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

Miss W. Then would all that the Apostles taught be sure to be right?

All. Yes, ma’am.

Miss W. God had appointed them to teach, and told them *what* they were to teach, and therefore the religion they taught would be—what sort of religion?

Several. True religion.

Miss W. When, therefore, the converts continued in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, their belief was—what sort of belief?

‘A true belief,’ said several.

Miss W. And their obedience?

‘A true obedience,’ again they replied.

Miss W. And their worship—?

‘A true worship,’ said all.

Miss W. Therefore their religion was a true religion, and such as we pray in the Collect the Church may be kept in. ‘O Lord, we beseech Thee?’—

Andrew. ‘To keep thy Church and household continually in Thy true religion.’

Miss W. God has in great mercy ever kept His

Church in true religion. Parts of it may have fallen into error ; but the whole faith has been preserved in the Church, because she has ever kept the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and continued in breaking of bread and in prayers. Let us see, boys, how God has dealt with our own branch of the Church, and how mercifully He has kept her in true religion. Whose creed do we say every Sunday ?

All. The Apostles' Creed.

Miss W. Yes, and in this creed we are taught what we are to— ?

‘Believe,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. And how are we taught what we are to do ?

Edward. The clergyman teaches us from the Bible.

Miss W. Thus we still learn from the Apostles. And from whom have our Bishops and Priests received their authority to teach ?

Francis. From the Apostles.

Miss W. Rather from God through the Apostles. And is the worship of our Church like that of the apostles ? We continue in what ?

Several. Breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Miss W. What do you mean by breaking of bread ?

Edward. The holy communion.

‘Yes,’ Miss Walton continued, ‘God has in great mercy preserved to our Church the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and the true sacraments and prayers ; and where these are faithfully received, there is true religion. Still we must pray God to *continue* to keep His Church in true religion, for there are those who would alter the Apostles’ doctrine, and dissolve their fellowship, and who think lightly of breaking of bread and of prayers. We must fear also lest the sin of each individual member of the Church should provoke God to withdraw from her His protecting hand. What do we pray for at the end of the Collect ?

Sam. 'That they who do lean only upon the hope of Thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by Thy mighty power.'

Miss W. I will not say anything on this part of the Collect, for it is nearly the same prayer in other words, as we have had the last two Sundays. Let us rather now see what lesson we must learn from what we have been saying. Who are told to put on mercies and kindness in the epistle?

Charley. The elect of God.

Miss W. What is meant by the elect of God?

Edward. The chosen of God.

Miss W. Yes, the chosen of God, or the members of His household. What are they here taught?

Alfred. To put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering.

Miss W. Yes, and St. Paul says, put them on therefore—why?

Edward. As the elect of God.

Miss W. That is, even *because you are* the elect of God, you must strive to be holy. Why does St. Paul say in Col. i. 28, he preached Christ?

George. 'Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man *perfect* in Christ?'

Miss W. Each member of the Church, then, must strive to be—what, boys?

Francis. Perfect.

Miss W. Yes, this is what you must learn to-day. That 'as the elect of God,' being 'called in one body,' you must each for yourself strive to be holy, 'till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto—?'

'A *perfect* man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,' continued George. (Eph. iv. 13.)

'And now,' said Miss Walton, 'as you have been very attentive, and the catechising has been hard, I will stop and read to you, when you have told me

what manifestation we have to-day. To whom was the parable spoken that we have in the Gospel to-day? Look at the first verses of the chapter from which it is taken, and then tell me.'

Charley. To great multitudes that were gathered together.

Miss W. Had Jesus been speaking any other parables?

Several. Yes, a great number.

Miss W. But to whom amongst the multitude did he explain the parables?

Alfred. To the disciples.

Miss W. What else are they called besides disciples?

Edward. Apostles.

Miss W. And *why* did He speak parables to the people at all?

Francis. To teach them.

Miss W. As what, then, did He manifest Himself?

Edward. As a teacher.

Miss W. A teacher of whom?

Several. Of the people.

Miss W. Yes, but more especially of His—?

Francis. Apostles.

Miss W. Why do I say more especially of them?

Edward. Because He explained His teaching to them.

Miss W. And afterwards, what did He send them to do?

George. To teach all nations.

Miss W. He explained, then, His parables to them, in order that they might be able—?

'To teach others,' said Alfred.

Miss W. We see Jesus Christ, then, to-day manifesting Himself as the teacher of His ministers, in order that they may teach His 'Church and household.' Does He teach the ministers of His Church *now*?

Edward. Yes, by His Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Both by His Holy Spirit, and by the written word, which He formerly *spoke* to His Apostles : and therefore, boys, we can pray that God would continue to keep His Church in true religion, by continuing to be the teacher of His ministers and people.

‘Now, ma’am, are you going to read us some more of Basil?’ asked several of the boys, as Miss Walton stopped speaking, and shut her book.

‘I *was* going to do so,’ she replied, ‘but the time I find is so short before Church, that I fear it is hardly worth while to begin ; but I will tell you what I will do. Come to me at two o’clock instead of the usual hour, and I will read to you after the lesson. Can you all do this?’

They all answered that they could, and Francis said he would rather do that than stay then, for they should hear more of the story in the afternoon.

‘What made you, Henry, so late at school this morning?’ asked Miss Walton.

He hesitated a moment, and then answered, ‘Father wanted me.’

Andrew looked at him with surprise, and a doubt passed through Miss Walton’s mind as to the truth of Henry’s word. She had reason to distrust him, for she had many times been deceived by him, and now she feared to inquire further, lest he should continue in falsehood. She took an opportunity, however, of asking his father, and found her suspicions too true, and that Henry had told this deliberate falsehood rather than confess that he had been sliding.

Henry was the oldest boy in the school, but one of the most careless, nor did either punishment or kindness seem to do him any good ; and now it was rather a question with Mr and Miss Walton whether, for the sake of the other boys, it would not be better to expel him from the school. They decided, how-

ever, to give him one more trial, and when Mr Walton punished him, he told him it was for the last time, and that for the next offence he should be expelled. Whether Henry improved or not, is yet to be seen. We must now leave him, and transport ourselves into the school-room again, when the afternoon lesson was finished, if we also wish to hear more of Basil.

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER III.

WHILE Bob was sitting at the bedside of Basil, Dick and his companions were reaping the first-fruits of their sin. They walked in silence to the prison, but no sooner was the key turned upon them, than, with one accord, the younger men began to accuse Crossman of being the author of all their misfortunes, while he fiercely denied the charge. Angry words, would probably have been followed by blows, if their hands had been at liberty.

This went on for some time, when at length they seemed weary of bickering, and one by one they sank into gloomy silence, and still more gloomy thought. In one corner sat Dick, who had said less than any in blame of Crossman, for he himself had taken such an active part in the whole proceeding, that he scarcely could throw the fault upon another. He looked very wretched, for he felt sure there could be no way for him to escape, and then came the thoughts of his parents, and he knew not how he should dare to face his justly angry father.

Dick had always been Hardman's favourite son. He was a sharp, clever boy, and appeared likely to get on in the world, which was, alas! all that Hardman looked to or cared about.

Dick knew that the disgrace in the eye of the world would enrage his father, and, as he sat, *gloomily* pondered over these things, and the hope-

lessness of escape. Angry disappointment and fear strove for mastery in his mind. One moment anger would gain the victory, and he would clench his fist and grind his teeth; the next moment a cold shudder would come over him, and he would tremble from head to foot. The thought of Basil lying senseless on the ground, which was the last Dick had seen of him, added to his fear, and a feeling something like remorse mixed itself with his other emotions. Thus passed the first night of Dick's confinement, and this was but the beginning of the misery which he had brought upon himself by his own wilful choice of evil.

When morning came the whole party were brought before the magistrates, and as Dick walked in broad daylight, a prisoner, and handcuffed, along the streets of the town where he was so well known, and when he met acquaintances who, but a few days before, had treated him with a kind of respect, because he was sharp and clever, and heard from them sometimes words of triumph, such as, 'He used to laugh at us, and now it seems we are the wisest of the two,' or words of pity, such as, 'Poor fellow! we always feared he would come to this,' the hot blood mounted into his cheeks, and a bitter, overwhelming shame, mixed with anger, almost distracted him. His very high spirits and his cunning cleverness made his present situation all the more galling. Alas! that, with all this, not one thought of real penitence, or of his sin in the sight of God, passed through his mind. He was not sorry for his fault: he was but ashamed and angry at the failure of his scheme, and fearful of the consequences.

The whole party were committed for trial, and were conducted back again to the prison to await the nearest sessions.

Passing over the scene between Dick and his father, we will only say that Dick's unbending pride

and disrespectful language added fearfully to his already heavy load of guilt. Leaving him, therefore, we will return to the bed-side of the sick boy.

The morning light found poor Basil little or no better. Throughout the day Bob sat by him, anxiously watching for his returning senses, there being no shop-work done that day. Hardman was restless and angry, and poor Mrs Hardman and her daughters did little else but weep, and attend to Basil. Mrs Hardman did this with the utmost kindness, for Basil's industry and gentle ways, had quite won her heart. She knew that Basil had not been to blame, both from the policeman's and Basil's own account. Dick had also told the whole truth about it, and, it may be, the knowledge that her own son was, in a measure, answerable for Basil's illness, made her the more anxious about him.

For many days his fever continued, and all Bob's spare time was spent at his bedside, though Basil was scarcely ever sensible. One day, however, when Bob had finished his dinner, he ran up stairs, as usual, to see how Basil was, and, to his great delight, found him awake, and looking quite different to what he had done. He softly approached the bed, Basil knew him, and, in a feeble voice, whispered, 'Is that you, Bob? I am so glad to see you.'

'How are you, dear Basil;' said Bob, sitting down and grasping his outstretched hand.

Basil answered that he felt very weak, and did not know what was the matter with him. Bob then said he must go and tell his mother, thinking the doctor ought to be sent for. As he left the room, Basil begged him to return quickly; but his mother sent him for the doctor, and it was not until evening, when his work was done, that he again saw Basil. He had, however, heard the doctor say that he hoped all danger was over, and as he sat at his work he felt happier than he had done for many

days. The evening found him again waiting upon his friend.

‘Oh ! Bob,’ said Basil, ‘I have wanted so much to see you.’

Bob explained to him what had prevented his immediate return, and then asked, ‘What do you want ?’

‘Do you remember,’ said Basil, ‘the last time you were with me at Church, Mr Airdale said in his sermon, that when people were ill they ought to send for the clergyman to pray with them, and he said he was always ready to come ?’

‘Yes, I remember,’ replied Bob.

‘Well,’ continued Basil, ‘I should so like him to come and see me. Do you think he would come ?’

‘Oh ! Basil, you are not going to die,’ was Bob’s reply, ‘I heard the doctor say so to-day. Don’t send for the parson : people say you are sure to die if you do.’

Ill as Basil was, he could not help smiling at this idea, and replied, ‘People are very silly ; I have often known folks get better after sending for the parson. And don’t you remember Mr Airdale said we ought to try and employ our time well when we were ill, and then sickness would do us good, and I do not know how to do it ; besides that,’ said Basil, looking very serious, ‘perhaps I shall not get better.’

‘Oh ! yes,’ replied Bob, ‘you will ; the doctor said you would.’

‘Still,’ argued Basil, ‘I should like Mr Airdale to come and see me. Mother always told me to send for a clergyman to teach me, if I was ill. Will you, Bob, go and ask him to come ?’

Bob hesitated, and said, ‘Won’t you be ashamed ?’

‘No,’ Basil replied, ‘why should I be ashamed ? and I don’t think I shall be afraid, for Mr Airdale always seems so kind and gentle. You will go for me, won’t you, Bob ?’

This was said with so much earnestness, that Bob replied, 'Yes, I will go, as you really wish me to; but do tell me why you want to see him?'

'Because he can teach me,' replied Basil, 'and pray with me; and you know, Bob, I have often done naughty things, and he will pray to God to forgive me all I have done wrong. Mother always told me I should think a great deal about a clergyman's prayers; and then, you know, a parson can read the absolution. Mother used to tell me all about it.'

'I wish I knew as much as you do,' replied Bob, with a sigh, 'and then, perhaps, I should not have been such a bad boy. Then, as if ashamed of what he had said, he suddenly changed the subject, and continued, 'I won't talk to you now—I'll go for the parson; but,' said he, hurriedly, 'do you think he'll be angry with me? I used to go to his school, and left without leave, and never would make a bow to him since?'

'I don't think he'll be angry about that,' replied Basil, 'I'm sure you need not be afraid; besides, you always will bow to him now, won't you?' he asked, with a smile, looking up into Bob's face.

Bob's only answer was a blush; and leaving the bed-side, he said, 'Well then, I will go.'

'Thank you very much,' said Basil, in a feeble voice, for this conversation had quite tired him in his weak state. Bob perceived it, and turning round again, asked, with a look of anxious affection, 'Can I give you any thing? you seem so weak.'

'I shall be better soon, by the time you come back, Bob, dear,' replied Basil.

As Bob proceeded to Mr Airdale's house, he thought over all Basil had said. How can Basil talk of his doing naughty things, he thought, when he is so good? Then he went on to compare his own conduct with Basil's, until he began to think he must be more wicked than any body, and he felt very un-

happy. At last he thought, 'I will talk to Basil, and ask him how I am to be good.' By this time he had reached Mr Airdale's door, and the remembrance of his rudeness made him almost afraid to knock. At length, however, he ventured, and the door was opened by Mr Airdale himself. Bob was so frightened that he could not speak, but Mr Airdale kindly said, 'Robert Hardman, is that you? do you want me for anything?'

'Please, sir,' he replied, with a bow, 'father's apprentice is very ill, and would like to see you.'

'I'll come directly,' answered Mr Airdale; and taking down his hat, he started, followed by Bob. Not one word did he say about Bob's rudeness, but kindly talked to him all the way, asking about Basil.

Bob told him everything he could, and spoke with great earnestness in Basil's favour. When they reached the house, he led the way up stairs. As Mr Airdale entered the room, he gave his blessing: 'Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in it.' Oh! how these words thrilled through the heart of little Basil, and brought to his mind his much-loved mother. Often had he heard those cheering words at her bed-side, but never since; and the sound of them again filled his mind with strangely mingled feelings. Mr Airdale approached his bed and asked him kindly how he was; and then told Bob he might leave them for a little while. He obeyed with reluctance, for there was something about the calm of that sick-room, the gentle words of the clergyman, and the pale face of his friend Basil, that subdued him, and made him feel as he had never before felt. He went out, however, but not into the street, nor to the rest of the family, but turned into a closet which was near Basil's room, and, sitting down, buried his face in his hands, and thoughts such as he had never known before crowded into his mind.

What was there, he thought, in Mr Airdale so common? What was it in those few simple words 'Peace be to this house,' which had affected him strangely? Why was it that he felt so unhappy about things that he had said or done which troubled him not at the time? What made him long so much to be taught his duty? While he was thus pondering he suddenly heard Mr Airdale, in a clear, soft tone of voice, begin to say, 'Remember not, Lord, our iniquities, nor the iniquities of our forefathers: spare good Lord, spare Thy people whom Thou hast deemed with Thy most precious blood, and be angry with us for ever.' He involuntarily sank his knees, and listened with earnest attention. He thought Mr Airdale must be praying for him, and with his whole heart he joined in each petition.

Poor Bob! how changed he was in the last few days, (weeks, perhaps, we ought to say, for he had begun to change from the time Basil was his companion,) and yet how much, how very much, was to be done! Now his feelings were excited; but would it be when this passed away? Basil's illness, his brother's disgrace, and his own loneliness, subdued him for the present; but would his present feelings continue, or would their effects be seen when this returned to their old course? We shall see, we follow him in his daily life, but now we must turn for a few moments to Basil.

What passed between him and Mr Airdale, of course, we cannot tell. We only know that he afterwards told Bob he was much happier, and that Mr Airdale had shown him what prayers to say and what psalms to repeat, while he lay on his sick-bed. He said also that he had told him to try and think about the meaning of the Creed. To take one part at a time, and to meditate upon it. To think of God as being his Father, and to try and remember all God's Fatherly do-

th him since he had been made his child in baptism.

Mr Airdale rose to leave, he promised to come and it was with no little anxiety that Basil for him.

w, boys,' said Miss Walton, 'I must stop. It is time you all went home to get your teas before evening church.' She rose as she spoke, and to prepare to leave. Fred with ready thought packed her things together, and then stood with the key in his hand ready to open and lock it again for her. He was always foremost in any little attention, and much she missed them when first he left the house and the parish.

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany.

COLLECT.

God, whose blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life; grant us, we beseech Thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves even as He is pure; that, when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom; where with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth, ever the God, world without end. Amen.

PART I.

‘We have now, boys,’ said Miss Walton, ‘come to last Sunday after Epiphany. Are there always Sundays?’

Several. No, not always.

Miss W. It depends upon the Feast of Easter. Now now to the rubric at the end of the Sundays after Trinity, and read it.

Read. ‘If there be any more Sundays before Advent Sunday, the service of some of those Sundays which were omitted after the Epiphany shall be taken to supply so many as are here wanting.’

Miss W. Very well; now tell me what the Gospel is about to-day?

Francis. Our Saviour’s second coming.

Miss W. And what do we think about during Advent?

Several. About our Saviour's second coming.

Miss W. Yes, and it is said that one reason why this Gospel is chosen for to-day, is because being sometimes used just before Advent, it may lead our thoughts to our Saviour's second coming, and thus help to prepare our minds for Advent. There is however, I think, another reason. Who does it say shall come in the clouds?

Alfred. The Son of Man.

Miss W. And what will He come for?

Charley. To judge us.

Miss W. Then when He was teaching His disciples, He manifested Himself as what?

‘As a Judge,’ said Edward.

Miss W. That is right. Now we have traced a distinct manifestation of Jesus Christ as God, each Sunday after the Epiphany. Let us then turn to the Collect. Who do you say came to destroy the works of the devil?

Several. The Son of God.

Miss W. And what else did He come to do?

David. To make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life.

Miss W. We shall find these two in some measure connected with each other. What is the first work of the devil's of which we read?

Edward. His tempting Adam and Eve.

Miss W. Look at the last verse of the third chapter of St. Luke. After tracing the genealogy of our Lord as far as Adam, how does it conclude?

Charley. ‘Which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.’

Miss W. Adam, then, placed in the Garden of Eden, was a—?

‘Son of God,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Of course, when we say this, we do not mean that he was son in the same way as Jesus

Christ is, who is the *only-begotten* Son of God. How was Adam made?

Andrew. God made him from the dust, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

Miss W. And in whose likeness was He made?

George. 'God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.' (Genesis, i. 27.)

Miss W. Therefore he was called—?

'His Son,' replied Edward.

Miss W. And where was he placed?

All. In the Garden of Eden.

Miss W. In whose presence did he live?

Alfred. In the presence of God.

Miss W. Did he then know anything of sin?

Several. No, he was quite good.

Miss W. While he was thus living in a state of innocence, who worked his ruin?

Edward. The devil; he tempted him to sin.

Miss W. Yes, and this is the first work of the devil's of which we hear; tempting man to sin. Man, then, having sinned, what did he lose?

Francis. His innocence.

Miss W. Whose image in him did sin deface?

Fred. The image of God.

Miss W. We may say, I think, that by sin man lost his sonship; he was no longer a son of God, as he had been in his innocence. Was Adam allowed to remain in the Garden of Eden?

George. No, he was driven out, and Cherubims and a flaming sword kept the way of the Tree of Life. (Gen. iii. 24.)

Miss W. What did Adam's sin bring into the world?

Edward. Death.

Miss W. Now look how changed was Adam's situation. From being a son of God, dwelling in innocence and happiness, with free access to the Tree of Life, and in the presence of God, he had become

sinful, subject to death, cast out from the presence of God, with no power to help himself. And who worked all this?

Several. The devil.

Miss W. Yes, it was his miserable work. By tempting man he brought sin and death into the world. And the children of Adam—did they regain innocence?

Alfred. No, the world continued very wicked.

Miss W. Yes; look at what is said of it before the flood. Gen. vi. 5.

Henry. 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.'

Miss W. We see, then, how the devil's work had prospered, and the whole world had become defiled, and man was unable to help himself. But was he left in this miserable state?

Edward. No: 'the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.' (1 John, iii. 8.)

Miss W. Let us now trace out how He did this in His own person. When He was born, what did the angel Gabriel say He was to be called?

James. 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.' (St. Matt. i. 21.)

Miss W. Very well; at once He was made known as the destroyer of sin, the work of the devil, and He accomplished it first of all by His birth. He took our nature, but without—what?

Edward. Without sin.

Miss W. Was there ever any one else born without sin?

Alfred. No, we are all born in sin, the children of wrath.

Miss W. By being born without sin, what did He begin to destroy?

Several. The works of the devil.

Miss W. As He grew up, did he continue holy?

Charley. Yes, He was good as a little child, and good as He grew to be a man:

Miss W. Did the devil ever tempt Him?

Edward. Yes, in the wilderness; but He resisted:

Miss W. Again, then, He manifested Himself the destroyer of sin, the work of the devil. What else besides sin did you say was the work of the devil?

Francis. Death.

Miss W. Look at what St. Paul says of this in Hebrews, ii. 14.

Samuel. 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that, through death, He might destroy him that *had the power of death, that is, the devil.*'

Miss W. Through death whom does it say our Saviour destroyed?

Fred. The devil.

Miss W. In destroying his works, our Saviour destroyed him. Look at what St. Paul says again in 2 Tim. i. 9, 10.

David. 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath *abolished death*, and hath brought life and immortality to light.'

Miss W. Did our Saviour suffer death?

All. Yes, He died on the cross.

Miss W. How then did He overcome death?

'By dying, and then rising again,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, by dying, though guiltless, and thus bearing the punishment of sin; and then rising, and thus overcoming death in His own person, and

taking away the sting for us. In whose nature did He rise?

Alfred. In man's nature.

Miss W. Very well; as man He died, and as man He rose again, and so overcame death, the work of the devil. Did the devil also work evil to the bodies of men?

Fred. Yes, many were brought to Christ possessed with devils.

Miss W. Had He power over them?

George. Yes, 'With authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him.' (St. Mark, i. 27.)

Miss W. We have now seen how our blessed Saviour, in His own person, destroyed the works of the devil. Let us also see how His *obedience* affected us. We were all dead in whom?

Francis. In Adam.

Miss W. Why was this?

Edward. Because we partake of Adam's nature.

Miss W. Yes, 'as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' (1 Cor. xv. 22.) In what nature did Christ destroy the works of the devil?

Alfred. In man's nature.

Miss W. Now look what St. Paul says of this in Rom. v. 18, 19.

James. 'Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the *obedience of one* shall many be made righteous.'

Miss W. He took our nature upon Him on purpose that *in it* He might be obedient, and yet suffer the punishment of sin; therefore in Him we are made—?

'Alive,' said several.

Miss W. Do you remember the parable of the strong man armed?

George. Yes, ma'am; 'he keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace.'

Miss W. Until when, Charley?

Till a stronger than he shall come upon him, and take away his armour wherein he trusteth, and divide the spoil. (See St. Luke, xi: 21, 22.)

Miss W. Now this is a type of what Christ has done for us. The devil was the—?

Alfred. Strong man armed.

Miss W. Yes, he kept man, his palace: How was he able to do this?

Edward. Because he was stronger than man.

Miss W. Who came upon him and took away his armour?

Several. Jesus Christ, who was stronger than he.

Miss W. Yes, Jesus Christ, who was stronger than the devil, came upon him, overcame sin and death, and divided the spoil. Having done this, what means did he appoint for our being made the sons of God?

Charley. Holy Baptism:

Miss W. Then we are made members of—what?

Fred. Of Christ's Body.

Miss W. Yes, *He* took *our* nature, and *we* are made members of *His* Body, and partake of His obedience; and thus we, 'who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.' (Eph. ii. 13.) What were we made in Holy Baptism besides members of Christ?

Several. Children of God.

Miss W. Yes, and you say in the Collect that God the Son was manifested that we might be made—?

Edgar. 'The sons of God and heirs of eternal life?'

Miss W. Can any of you remember a text which says the same?

George. 'But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' (Galatians, iv. 4, 5.)

Miss W. That is right. Christ was made of a woman, obedient to the law, that we might receive—what?

Samuel. 'The adoption of sons.'

Miss W. Can you remember, George, what follows the verse you have said?

George. 'Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.' (verse 7.)

Miss W. The same thing is said in Rom., viii. 17.

Henry. 'And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.'

Miss W. The epistle, you will see, teaches us the same truth. What has the Father bestowed upon us?

Fred. 'That we should be called the sons of God.'

Miss W. And afterwards we are told, that 'when He shall appear'—?

'We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is,' repeated Francis.

Miss W. We shall be 'joint-heirs' with Him in glory, and see Him as He is. But is an heir quite sure of the inheritance? Did you never hear of a father disinheriting his son?

Edward. Yes, ma'am, I have.

Miss W. Yes; sometimes a father does it to punish a son for misconduct. Now we, as sons of God, are heirs of eternal life; are we, therefore, quite sure of obtaining our inheritance?

Charley. No, we may lose it by our sin.

Miss W. Yes, indeed we may; this thought will lead us to the second part of the Collect; but I see that you are almost tired of listening and answering,

so I will read some more of Basil to you, and leave the rest of the Collect for the afternoon.

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER III.—*Continued.*

BASIL had not to wait long, Mr Airdale coming to see him again the very next day. This time he did not order Bob to leave the room, but even spoke kindly to him, and asked him if he would not like to stay whilst he read to Basil. Bob answered, with earnestness, that he should like it very much and sat down on the bed, by the side of Basil, while Mr Airdale read part of the third chapter of St. John's Epistle.

'Why, that is the epistle of this morning,' said Alfred.

'Yes,' said Miss Walton, 'it is; and if you remember what Mr Airdale had told Basil to meditate upon you will find it was very suitable.'

'Oh, yes, I remember,' said Charley; 'he had told him to think about God as his Father.'

Miss W. Yes, Charley, that is right. Now let us go on with the story, and see what Mr Airdale said about it.

When he had finished reading, he said:—'The love of the Father, Basil, is wonderfully shown to us here. God might have been kind to us, might not He? without allowing us to be called His sons.'

'Yes, sir,' answered Basil, 'as a master is kind.'

'Exactly so; and would it not have been a great mercy even to be called the servants of God? Do you remember what the prodigal son determined to say to his father when he returned?'

'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;—'

make me as one of thy hired servants.' (St. Luke, xv. 18, 19.)

'Yes; and the prodigal son would really have felt himself happy and highly favoured, (would he not?) if this request had been granted.'

'Yes, sir, I suppose he would,' replied Basil; 'but his father did more for him.'

'And God does more for us, does He not?'

'Yes, sir, He makes us His sons.'

'And so shows the love He bears to us,' continued Mr Airdale. 'He has the love of a father, so He adopts us for His sons. When were you adopted, Basil?'

'At my Baptism, sir.'

'And, before your Baptism, what were you?'

'I was a child of wrath.'

'How came God, then, ever to take you for His son?'

'It was because He loved me, was it not, sir?' asked Basil, while a happy smile passed over his face.

During this conversation, Bob sat by without speaking, but eagerly drinking in every word. He wondered whether he, too, had been made God's child; he remembered that he had been told so when he attended the school, but he had never taken much notice of it, and he felt now as if it could not be, because he was so wicked. He longed to ask Mr Airdale, but had not the courage, so he continued to listen, while Mr Airdale went on:—
'Yes, my boy. Behold, then, what manner of love God has bestowed upon you in making you His own son, even before you knew what He was doing for you. And now try to look *forward* to God's love as well as *backward*. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we *shall* be; but we know that when He shall appear, *we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is." Thus God will continue to show His love towards

us, not only in calling us His sons now, but by making us like unto Him hereafter.'

'Please, sir, when we die,' asked Basil, 'are we not made like unto Him?'

'Not as we shall be when He comes again, and "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." The souls of the good are in rest and peace from the hour of death, but the fulness of glory will not be until the resurrection. But, Basil, shall we be made like unto God hereafter, if we take no pains to be made like unto Him now? What does St. John go on to say?'

'Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.'

'Yes, my boy. Now, whilst you are upon earth, you are His son, and as His son, you must strive to be made like unto your Father, if you hope to be made "as He is," when He shall appear in glory. It is an unspeakable blessing, Basil, to have been made God's son, if you try to live a good and holy life.'

'I hope I shall, sir, if I get better,' replied Basil.

'You must, then, try to keep yourself pure from sin, my dear boy, by watchfulness and care; and when you do fall, you must go to Him for pardon, who alone can wash away sin. Who is that, Basil?'

'Jesus Christ,' he replied.

'And, without Him, could you ever hope to be made holy?'

'No, sir.'

'No; it is He who has destroyed the works of the devil, and made us the sons of God; and He will help you, Basil, by His Holy Spirit to be perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect, if you ask Him to do so. Have you tried to think of God as your Father since I was here yesterday?'

‘Yes, sir, I have tried,’ he answered, ‘but you have made it easier for me now.’

‘Will you also try to think of Jesus Christ, who has destroyed the works of the devil, and through whom you have been made a son of God, and an heir of eternal life? Even while you are sick, you may be doing something towards being made like unto Him, by being patient, and gentle, and thankful for what is done for you, and by trying to spend as much time as you can in holy thought.’

Having said this, Mr Airdale was going to say some prayers with Basil, when he was struck by poor Bob’s look of unhappiness; for during the last part of the conversation Bob had felt very unhappy, knowing that he had never tried to live as a son of God, or thought of being pure and holy. Mr Airdale looked kindly at him, saying, ‘Robert, have you been listening to what I have taught Basil?’

Bob was too unhappy to remember to feel ashamed, as he thought he always should be, and it was well that he was, for any shame that would now have prevented his speaking, would have been both foolish and wrong.

‘Yes, sir,’ he answered; ‘but *I* cannot be a son of God, I have always been so wicked,’ and he turned his face away as he spoke, to hide the starting tear.

‘Listen to me, Robert, and I will read you the account of the prodigal son we were just mentioning,’ said Mr Airdale; and he proceeded to read the history of him who had wandered from his father, had wasted his substance in riotous living, and yet, when he returned, was received again by his father as a son who had been dead and was alive again, who had been lost and was found. (See St. Luke, xv. 11-32.) And then he went on to tell Robert that though he, like the prodigal son, had wandered from his father’s house, yet was there a way for him to return; and that though he was an erring son, yet he was a son; *and that* God his Father was ready and willing to

receive him, if with a true penitent heart he turned unto him. 'Have you never sinned against your earthly father?' asked Mr Airdale.

'Oh! indeed I have!' replied Bob, 'many, many times. Basil knows how very often.'

Basil, when thus appealed to, felt inclined to speak, and make excuses for his friend, but Mr Airdale's look bade him be silent, while he went on to ask Bob, 'And after your faults, Robert, did you feel that you were no longer his son? or now, when you remember them, do you think that you are not his son?'

'No, sir, I don't feel that,' he replied. 'I know I have been a bad son to him, for I have disobeyed him, and laughed at him, and not done his work, but I know that I am his son still.'

'Yes, Robert,' said Mr Airdale, 'this is true. You have been an unfaithful son, but still you are his son. Cannot you believe the same with regard to your heavenly Father? His child you were made at your Baptism, but you have been a disobedient child; you have perhaps laughed at holy things, and you have not done the work that God has appointed for you; but still He is so merciful that He will not cast you off, if now, with the prodigal son, you will say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."'

Robert, during these last few words, could no longer restrain his tears, but sobbing at the memory of his many sins towards God his Father, he forgot the presence of Basil, and almost that of Mr Airdale, while he seemed to remember nothing but how grievously he had fallen. When Mr Airdale stopped speaking, he said, 'But oh! sir, did you not say that we should not be made like unto God hereafter, if we had not tried to be like Him now?'

'I did say so, my boy, but there is yet time for you to set to work. God is mercifully bringing you

to repentance that you may no longer live as a stranger to Him, but that in humility, and, it may be, for a time in fear, you may strive to be made like unto Him. You do not wish to go on, do you, in the way that you have done?"

'Oh, no, sir, I wish very much to be good, if only I knew how; but I do not; I am not like Basil, he is so good.'

'Oh, no, indeed, I am not; do not say so,' pleaded Basil.

'Basil is not good,' said Mr Airdale. 'We are none of us good; he is only striving after goodness, and you must strive together, boys. We hope, Robert, that God will in mercy spare your friend, and you and he must strive together to walk along the narrow way. You must help each other.'

This was a thought of great comfort to poor Bob, and, taking Basil's outstretched hand, he asked, 'Will you help me, Basil?'

'We will help each other,' he replied. 'And you will help us, won't you, sir?' he said, speaking to Mr Airdale.

'Yes, indeed, I will, in every way that I can,' he replied; and then speaking again to Bob, he told him to try and remember all he had done wrong, and to bring each fault in order before himself as well as he could, to confess them one by one to his Almighty Father. At the same time he told him to come to him every Friday evening for a little while: 'I will teach you,' said he; 'and when Basil is better, you may bring him with you. And now,' he continued, 'I have said as much as you will remember to-day, so let us kneel down and pray to Him who alone can give repentance and pardon.'

After Mr Airdale left, Bob sat for some time without speaking, but at length Basil broke the silence, by saying, 'Bob, are you not glad you talked to Mr Airdale?'

‘I am very glad,’ he replied ; ‘for now I hope he will help me and teach me to be good, like you, Basil.’

‘Don’t say like me ; you heard Mr Airdale say I was not good ; and I am sure if you knew how impatient I am sometimes, when I am lying here alone, and how angry I have felt when I was teased, you would not call me good.’

At that moment the voice of Mrs Hardman was heard calling for Bob. His first impulse was not to answer, for he wanted to go on talking to Basil, but his newly-awakened conscience told him *that* would be wrong ; so saying to Basil, ‘I’ll come back as soon as I can,’ he ran down stairs.

‘Where have you been, Bob?’ asked his mother, in an angry tone. ‘I’ve been looking for you in the street for the last ten minutes. Lucy said she had seen you go out.’

A saucy answer was the first that presented itself to Bob’s mind, but he checked himself in time, and replied, ‘I was with Basil.’

‘You are always there,’ answered his mother ; ‘you waste half your time up there ; but you won’t go to him again to-night, for your father has left you that parcel to take to Mr Hunt’s, so you must be off quickly, or you’ll not get back by bed-time.’

Again poor Bob was sorely tempted to be saucy, both from his mother’s angry way of speaking to him, and because he knew that he had never gone to Basil during working hours, so that it could not be said with justice that he wasted his time there. The memory, however, of Basil’s example, and his own late confessions and prayers, helped him again to reply, ‘I did not know I had to take the parcel, mother. May I just run and tell Basil I have to go? he is expecting me back.’

‘No, that you won’t,’ replied his mother, ‘or you’ll never get off. You must go directly.’

Bob durst not trust himself to speak again, and for

a moment he stood irresolute, half determining to go back to Basil, in spite of his mother; but his little sister Mary came in to his assistance; for, running up to him, she whispered, 'I'll go and tell Basil,' and before he had time to say 'thank you,' skipped up stairs.

Bob immediately took down his cap and set off, but his trial was not over, for he still had to struggle with his feelings. 'How can I be good,' he began to think, 'when people are so unreasonable? I had done nothing to vex mother, why should she be angry?' But something seemed to whisper to him, 'Have you never been angry without reason, and hasn't your poor mother enough to make her vexed just now? perhaps she did not know she was speaking angrily.'

Bob almost stopped in his walk, for he could hardly tell whether these were his own thoughts, or words spoken. He soon found that no one had *spoken*, and he was led on to remember that he ought not to be surprised that his mother could not trust him to return to Basil, for but a few weeks before, he would perhaps have made it an opportunity to escape from his errand, and then he felt ashamed of his first angry feelings.

It was late ere he returned home, for Mr Hunt lived a mile out of the town, so that on going up stairs, he found Basil was asleep; even then, therefore, he could not talk to him as he had half hoped he might. So having undressed as quietly as possible, and having confessed in prayer the wrong things he could remember that he had either done or felt during the day, he laid his head upon his pillow, and was soon asleep also.

As Miss Walton closed the book, Francis asked, 'Could Bob help those thoughts coming into his *mind*?'

‘No,’ said Miss Walton, ‘I don’t think he could help it then ; but he *could* help indulging them ; as, indeed, he did. Bob was only just beginning to think about doing right, and evil doing and evil thoughts were more natural to him than good ones, having been so long accustomed to them.’

‘I suppose,’ said Alfred, ‘he had got the habit of doing wrong, which you tell us we should take care not to do.’

‘Just so,’ answered Miss Walton ; ‘and therefore it was much harder for him at first to do and think rightly, than it was for Basil, who had been brought up carefully, and had gained almost the *habit* of doing *right* instead of wrong.’

‘I am sure Basil was the happiest,’ Miss Walton heard Charley half whisper to himself, as she rose to call over the names.

PART II.

THE afternoon lesson began by Miss Walton’s asking a few more questions on the Collect. ‘I do not think, boys, it will take us very long to finish the Collect,’ said she, ‘after the story this morning. What do we pray God to enable us to do ?’

Several. ‘Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure.’

Miss W. Has any hope been mentioned before ?

‘No, ma’am,’ they replied.

Miss W. Then what do we mean by ‘having this hope ?’

The boys could not answer, so Miss Walton continued : ‘Did you say that an heir was quite sure of an inheritance ?’

Edward. No, ma’am ; we said that he might lose it.

Miss W. And what did you say might make us lose our eternal inheritance ?

‘Our sins,’ said Fred.

Miss W. What, then, can we be said to *hope* for?
Francis. Eternal life.

Miss W. Yes, Christ came that He might make us the 'sons of God, and heirs of eternal life;' but we may lose it by—?

'Our sins,' said Fred.

Miss W. Therefore we pray that 'having this hope,' that is, the hope of—?

'Eternal life,' said Francis.

'We may do what?' Miss Walton asked.

All. 'Purify ourselves even as He is pure; that when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom.'

Miss W. What does purify mean?

Edward. To make clean.

Miss W. And although we pray that we may purify ourselves, does it mean that we can do so by our own power?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No, or else we need not pray to God to grant that we may do so. Tell me what it is that purifies us.

Samuel. The blood of Christ.

Miss W. What makes us impure?

James. Our sins.

Miss W. And what alone can wash away our sins?

George. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' (1 St. John, i. 7.)

Miss W. But although the blood of Christ can alone make us clean after we have sinned, and although it is only *through* Him that we can be clean at all, still He puts it into our own power to do much ourselves, assisted by His grace, towards keeping our purity. Let us see how, in one or two particulars. When you stand, boys, at the street corner, what sort of conversation do you hear?

'Bad enough sometimes,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, most impure, unholy conversation. Are you obliged to listen to it?

‘No, ma’am, we could go away,’ said Charley.

Miss W. But if you choose to stay, as I am sorry to say some of you do, whose fault is it that your minds are defiled?

‘Please, ma’am, would listening only, make us impure?’ asked Francis.

Miss W. Yes, surely it would, Francis, when you do it of your own choice. ‘Can a man touch pitch and not be defiled?’ Whose fault then is it if you are impure?

‘Our own,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. And now, if we go on a little further, I fear we shall find that the first beginning of impurity often leads to much worse. Do you think you would go on *only* listening, for long?

‘I suppose not,’ said Francis.

Miss W. What would the next step be?

Fred. Speaking ourselves.

Miss W. Then, would you be more impure?

All. Yes, ma’am.

Miss W. And from speaking, perhaps, you would go on to action, impure, unholy action, such as we cannot even speak of. Oh! boys! it is a fearful thing to take the first steps in impurity, and it makes me tremble when I see you listening to, and joining in, impure, unholy talk, for you never do it without being tainted, and it may be you will be led on until you become wholly defiled. I have seen it so but too often, boys, in my long and intimate knowledge of the poor, and I would, therefore,’ said Miss Walton, with earnest seriousness, ‘especially warn you elder boys, you who are almost growing out of boyhood, and must now make your choice whether you will strive to keep yourselves pure, or join those whose talk and example will lead you to defilement.’ The elder boys listened with great attention, as they

always did when Miss Walton spoke seriously to them, and some of them, we must hope, profited by her words of warning; but others, alas! merely heard them with their ears, and by never acting upon them, only increased their guilt. 'Let us now suppose, boys,' she continued, 'that you turn away and refuse to listen to what is impure. You then do something towards keeping yourselves—what?'

'Keeping ourselves pure,' said Andrew.

Miss W. Yes, and it is the same with any sin; for what do *all* sins do?

'They defile us,' said Fred.

Miss W. Then if you watch against sin, and do not let it get a hold upon you, you are—?

'Keeping ourselves pure,' said Francis.

'Had not Basil always tried to keep himself pure?' asked Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, he had, and Bob may be an example of one who had to regain his purity. But even Basil needed to be daily purified anew, for do we pass even a day without sin?

All. No.

Miss W. Then every day what do we need?

Alfred. To be made pure again by the blood of Christ.

Miss W. Who is set before us as an ensample of purity?

Andrew. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Yes, He was perfectly pure and sinless, as we said this morning, and through Him we must strive to be made like unto Him, that when He shall appear—?

'We may be like unto Him,' they continued, 'in His eternal and glorious kingdom.'

Miss W. What did the story this morning teach you about this?

Francis. That we should not be made like unto Him hereafter, if we did not try to be so now.

Miss W. Look at what St. Paul says of this in Eph. v. 5.

George. 'For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor *unclean* person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.'

'There are many similar passages,' said Miss Walton, 'which you may read when you get home, showing you that without holiness, or purity, no man can see the Lord. (See Heb. xii. 14. 1 Cor. v. 9, 10. Gal. v. 21. Rev. xxii. 15.) On the other hand, what does our Saviour say in His sermon on the mount about the pure in heart?

David. 'Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.' (St. Matt. v. 8.)

Miss W. And in the 24th Psalm, 3rd to 5th verses, you will find the same lesson taught.

Samuel. 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall rise up in His holy place? Even He that hath *clean* hands, and a *pure* heart, and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.'

Miss W. You learn, then, to-day, boys, that you must each strive to be pure, even as Christ is pure, if you hope to be able to stand before Him when He comes in His glory. What does the Collect say He shall come in besides glory?

Francis. In power.

Miss W. Whom will He have power to punish?

Alfred. The unclean.

Miss W. Yes, He will have power, and He will use it then, for the day of grace will have passed away. What will He say to those on His left hand?

George. 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' (St. Matt. xxv. 41.)

Miss W. ‘Think, boys, how awful it would be for you to be found at that day among the wicked, to be cast out of His left hand, to be sent away from Him, and now, while you have time, take warning, try to keep yourselves pure, and ask Him forgiveness where you have already erred. And you, boys, listen to me,’ said Miss Walton. ‘You are not too young to be impure. Every bad action you commit, every naughty, angry word you say, and every saucy and proud thought you have, make you impure. What must you then do?’

‘Try also to keep ourselves pure,’ said Al.

Miss W. Yes, boys, you must, both you and I, older, try to avoid those things, or places, that tempt you to be impure, that you may keep your white robes of Baptism unspotted, and when Christ shall appear, to be made like unto Him, and beautiful, in His eternal and glorious kingdom, where, with the Father, and with the Holy Spirit, He lives and reigns, ever one God, world without end.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Septuagesima Sunday.

COLLECT.

O Lord, we beseech Thee favourably to hear the prayers of Thy people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by Thy goodness, for the glory of Thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Miss Walton. What is this Sunday called?

Several. Septuagesima.

Miss W. The reason given for this is, because it is about seventy days before Easter. What is next Sunday called?

‘Sexagesima,’ replied Francis.

Miss W. Yes, because it comes about sixty days before Easter. And the Sunday after, what is it called?

All. Quinquagesima.

Miss W. Or fifty days before Easter. The first Sunday in Lent is also sometimes named ‘Quadragesima,’ or forty days before Easter. Septuagesima means, in Latin, the seventieth, and so with the three other words. How do we ask God to hear our prayers to-day?

Several. Favourably.

‘Which means,’ said Miss Walton, ‘much the

same as mercifully. We might say, hear us according to Thy—?’

‘Favour,’ said Francis.

‘Mercy,’ said Fred.

Miss W. Yes; or as David prays in Psalm 149.

Andrew. ‘Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy loving-kindness.’

Miss W. And again. Psalm lxix. 14.

Henry. ‘Hear me, O God, in the multitude of Thy mercy.’

Miss W. We pray to God, then, favourably to hear—?

‘The prayers of Thy people; that we who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by Thy goodness,’ repeated several.

Miss W. What do you mean by offences?

Edward. Faults or sins.

Miss W. And we say that we *are* justly punished and therefore pray that we may be—?

‘Mercifully delivered,’ said Samuel.

Miss W. Delivered from what?

Edward. From punishment.

Miss W. By whose goodness?

Charley. By the goodness of God.

Miss W. If, then, we are delivered, it will not be because we deserve it, but because—?

‘God is good,’ said several.

Miss W. And it will also be for the—?

‘Glory of His Name,’ replied Alfred.

Miss W. And *through* whom?

All. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Miss W. Yes, when we are delivered, it is by God’s goodness, *for* the glory of His Name, *through* Jesus Christ. Let us now see how we are justly punished, and that our punishment is just. What did God say to Adam after his sin? You may find at Gen. iii. 17-19.

George. 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'

Miss W. And had Adam been warned of the consequence of disobedience?

Edward. Yes; God said, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' (Gen. ii. 17.)

Miss W. Then when the punishment came, did he deserve it?

Alfred. Yes, because he had been disobedient, and God had said He would punish him.

Miss W. God, then, was just in punishing sin; and has the curse yet been removed?

'No, ma'am,' said Edward; 'we are still obliged to work for our bread.'

'And we are still subject to death,' said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes; the curse has not been fully removed, for thorns and thistles grow instead of what is good and useful, and in the sweat of his brow, and in sorrow, man eats bread, while death is ever hanging over us. All this is, then, the punishment of what?

Several. 'Our offences.'

Miss W. If there had been no sin, would there have been any sorrow?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. Or any sickness?

All. No.

Miss W. Or any death?

All. No, ma'am.

'How strange that would be,' remarked Francis.

Miss W. Yes, it would seem strange to us; but let us remember that all this is the punishment of sin, and thus learn how hateful it is. If we were all

perfectly good, there would be no sorrow. And ourselves, are *we* without sin?

Andrew. No; we are all born in sin.

Miss W. Then, being guilty, do we deserve we suffer?

‘Yes, we are punished justly,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Look at what David says of his wickedness in Psalm li. 5.

Edgar. ‘Behold, I was shapen in wickedness in sin hath my mother conceived me.’

Miss W. And again in Psalm lviii. 3, of other

James. ‘The ungodly are froward, even from mother’s womb; as soon as they are born, they are astray, and speak lies.’

Miss W. Yes; we are all sinful creatures, being sinful, we are ‘justly punished for our offences.’ But does God always punish in anger?

‘No,’ said George, ‘whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.’ (Heb. xii. 6.)

Miss W. For what does God sometimes punish us?

Alfred. To bring us to repentance.

Miss W. But should we have needed even punishment in love, if we had never sinned?

Francis. No, for then we should not have needed to repent.

Miss W. To those also who are trying to do right, each sin brings its own punishment. Do you feel happy when you have done wrong, boys?

Alfred. No, ma’am, indeed we don’t.

Miss W. What makes you unhappy?

‘Because we are sorry,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, and sorrow is painful, and therefore it is a—?

‘Punishment,’ said Edward.

Miss W. But it is not from such punishment that we should chiefly pray to be delivered.

God has turned them into blessings. Is there any punishment in store for the wicked in another world?

Edgar. Yes, ma'am; the punishment of hell.

Miss W. Do you remember any text which says this?

Francis. 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.' (Psalm ix. 17.)

Miss W. As sinful creatures, do *we* not, each one of us, also deserve this punishment?

'Yes, ma'am,' said several.

Miss W. What does St. Paul say about the wages of sin?

George. 'The wages of sin is death.' (Rom. vi. 23.)

Miss W. This is, then, the punishment from which we should chiefly pray to God—?

'Mercifully to deliver us,' said several.

Miss W. We *may* pray to Him to deliver us from *all* punishment, but we should chiefly seek to be delivered from that eternal punishment which is to come. Sickness and sorrow God may send for our good, and then would it be well for us if they were removed?

'Not when they do us good, I suppose,' said Edward.

Miss W. But the punishment of the next world we must both pray and earnestly try to escape from. Do we ask in the Litany to be delivered from evils?

Alfred. 'From lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death, good Lord deliver us.'

Miss W. Afterwards we pray to be delivered from the evils to come; can you tell me where?

Edward. 'In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, good Lord deliver us.'

Miss W. In the Lord's prayer also we find the same petition. Can you tell in which clause?

Francis. 'Deliver us from evil.'

Miss W. We have now seen that we *are* punished—how?

Edward. By the sorrows, and troubles, and sickness of this world, and death which follows.

Miss W. And we have seen that we are *justly* punished. Why?

Alfred. Because we are sinful when we ought to be good.

Miss W. And now we go on to pray that we may be mercifully delivered by—what?

Several. God's goodness.

Miss W. Supposing you had any of you offended your father very seriously, by doing something he had strictly forbidden you to do. What would you deserve?

Several. To be punished.

Miss W. Well, now, supposing you were sorry and confessed your fault to your father, should you still deserve to be punished? Could your fault be undone by your confession?

Charley. No, ma'am; we should still deserve to be punished.

Miss W. Then, if your father said, 'I will forgive you, and not punish you,' what would you think about him?

Francis. That he was very kind and good.

Miss W. Yes, and you would be forgiven, not because you deserved it, but because your father was—?

'So good and kind,' said several.

Miss W. So it is with Almighty God. We offend Him and disobey Him, and yet does He always punish us?

All. No, not always.

Miss W. In mercy, even in this world, He often *withholds* punishment. What blessings might He *take away* if He treated us as we deserve?

Edward. Every blessing.

‘Our friends,’ said Alfred.

‘Or our health,’ said Francis.

‘Or our food,’ said David.

Miss W. Yes, boys; we may say with Ezra, although we do suffer for our offences, God has ‘punished us less than our iniquities deserve.’ (Ezra, ix. 13). And it is through whom that we pray to be delivered?

All. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Miss W. Let us now suppose again that you had disobeyed your father, we will say by touching something valuable which he had forbidden you to touch, and had said you should pay for if you injured; and that, notwithstanding, you had done so, what would be the consequence?

Several. We should have to pay.

Miss W. Could your father forgive you after what he had said?

Alfred. No, not if he said we *must* pay.

Miss W. Yet has not God said, ‘The soul that sinneth, it shall die?’ (Ezek. xviii. 4.) How then can He go back from His word, and grant pardon? Now, if any one came forward and said, ‘I will pay for you,’ could your father forgive you then?

Samuel. Yes, he might if he liked.

Miss W. But he *might* also refuse, might not he?

‘Yes, but he could forgive if he liked,’ persisted Edward.

Miss W. If he did forgive you, would it be because you deserved it?

Edward. No, but because another would pay for us.

Miss W. He would forgive you because he was kind, and because another had paid in your stead. Then how is it God remits our punishment?

Charley. Because Jesus Christ bore it for us.

Miss W. Yes, and God is so merciful that He accepts His sufferings for ours, His punishment in

the place of ours; therefore we can pray that we may be?—

‘Mercifully delivered,’ they continued.

Miss W. Through Jesus Christ our—

‘Saviour,’ said Andrew.

Miss W. Saviour, because He saves us from what?

Edward. Punishment.

Miss W. What punishment?

Charley. The punishment of hell-fire.

Miss W. Last Sunday we spoke of His coming to destroy the works of the devil; and to-day we see that it is through Him that we escape eternal punishment; for, because of our own offences, we are—?

All. Justly punished.

Miss W. But by the goodness of God, through Jesus our Saviour, we pray to be—?

‘Mercifully delivered,’ again they replied.

Miss W. ‘Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy’ He saves us. (Titus, iii. 5.) And look what St. Paul says again in Eph. ii. 8.

Henry. ‘For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.’

Miss W. There is one point more in the Collect which you must notice, boys. We say, ‘by Thy goodness, for’—?

‘The glory of Thy Name,’ said several.

Miss W. David in the Psalms speaks in the same way; can you remember any verse?

George. ‘For Thy Name’s sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin; for it is great.’ (Psalm xxv. 10.)

Miss W. Look again at Psalm lxxix. 9.

Samuel. ‘Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy Name. O deliver us, and be merciful unto our sins, for Thy Name’s sake.’

‘St. Paul, also,’ said Miss Walton, ‘in writing to

the Thessalonians, prays that the Name of God may be glorified. Look at 2 Thes. i. 12.'

David. 'That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Miss W. There are many other verses which you may find another time, but not now. We learn, then, that God's name is glorified by the pardon of our sins and the remission of punishment. Let us see how. When a sinner repenteth, what do we read that the angels do?

Several. They rejoice.

Miss W. And to whom would they give glory?

Alfred. To Almighty God.

Miss W. They sing 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain—'

'To receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing,' continued Edward. (Rev. v. 12.)

Miss W. Now look at the account given in Rev. vii. 9-15, of those who have been saved from punishment and from sin.

The boys found the place and read in turns the following verses: 'After this, I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and *glory*, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence

came they?...*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.'

Miss W. Thus we see that they who are delivered will spend an endless eternity in glorifying God. But we must also learn from the Collect that we should try in every way we can to glorify God now, even as our Saviour teaches us in the Lord's prayer. Is there any mention there of God's Name being glorified?

Francis. Yes, 'Hallowed be Thy Name.'

Miss W. This is the second way in which this Collect is like the Lord's prayer. The one teaches us to pray that God's Name may be hallowed; the other, that it may be—?

'Glorified,' said several.

Miss W. Yes, boys, and we should try to think of His glory, even when we are praying for blessings upon ourselves; and whatever we do, in word or deed, we should do it to what—?

'To the *glory of God*,' replied several.

'That will do,' said Miss Walton; 'I am now going to see poor Mrs Turner: she sent word she wanted to speak to me before Church. Can I trust you, boys, to sit quietly for ten minutes? You may be looking for more texts about the glory of God's Name, if you like; and then will you walk down to Church orderly without me?'

'I don't know, ma'am, how that will be,' said Edward.

Miss Walton smiled, and asked, 'Do you intend to make a noise?'

'No, ma'am; *I'll be quiet*,' he answered.

'Very well,' said she; 'you shall each answer for yourselves,' and turning round, she asked them one by one. Of course they all promised that they

would be quiet, and what is more, they kept their promise, as boys generally will, when, on any particular occasion, they are trusted. On Miss Walton's entering the Church, she found them all sitting quietly in their places. After service, Alfred ran up to her, and said, 'Please, ma'am, we were good boys this morning; will you read some more of Basil to us?'

'You were all good, were you?' she asked.

'Yes, ma'am, yes, ma'am,' resounded from several round her.

'Very well,' she said, 'I will read to you this afternoon.'

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER IV.

THE fever having now left Basil, his recovery was rapid, and very soon he was allowed to leave his bed and be dressed. The first day he did so was a happy day to Bob. I really believe he enjoyed it more than Basil himself, and nothing would satisfy him but he must help Basil to dress; the moment, therefore, his morning work was over, he escaped upstairs to his friend. Then how glad he was when Basil said he was comfortable, and thanked Bob for making him so. Mr Airdale had sent some dinner for the sick boy, and Bob set it out before him, and was delighted to see him eat it with real appetite; being almost angry with the doctor for having cautioned Basil not to eat too much at first, lest it should bring a return of fever. Basil himself thought it rather hard, for he was *very* hungry. Then came the day for him to go down stairs. The children counted upon it, for Basil was a great favourite with them all. Little Mary set a chair for him by the window, with a stool for his feet; and Lucy swept

the floor to make things look comfortable. Mrs Hardman smiled, and said she was glad to see Basil down stairs again, and even Hardman himself spoke kindly, saying he hoped Basil would soon be able to come to work again. As to Bob, he was quite beside himself; he danced about the room and began singing every now and then, laughing at Basil for being wrapped up, declaring he was just like an old woman, and addressing him as 'old woman' whenever he spoke to him, to the great amusement of the children. Basil himself for some time felt very happy, and thought how kind they all were. But when dinner-time arrived, a gloom was cast over every thing, for all at once each one seemed to remember poor Dick. Basil had never before realized that he was gone from among them, and the thought of the cause of his absence, and where he was, gave Basil great pain. And now for the first time he heard that he should most likely, in a week or two, have to appear as a witness against the gang. He could not bear the thought, for he would have given any thing if at that moment he could have set Dick free. At night, when he and Bob had gone up to bed, they talked the matter over, and wondered whether there was any chance of Dick's escaping punishment. 'Every body declares there is not,' said Bob, 'and they are always saying he deserves all he'll get. It makes me feel so angry when I hear people say so.'

'Indeed, it is not kind,' replied Basil. 'When people used to say such things to poor mother, she always answered, "What would become of each of us if God punished us as we deserve."'

The two boys were silent for a little while after this, when Bob suddenly sat up in bed and said, 'Basil, do you think God will punish me for all I have done wrong?'

Basil hardly knew what to answer; at length he

said, 'Mother used to tell me that God did punish us by sending sickness or trouble upon us, but that He did it in love, not in anger.'

Again Bob lay down, and was silent for a few minutes, and then said, 'Perhaps your sickness, Basil, and all our trouble about Dick, is a punishment to me.'

'I don't know,' replied Basil; 'Mr Airdale said I was to think of my sickness as a punishment which God had sent in love, to do me good; but he said it depended upon how I used it whether it did me good or not.'

'What do you mean by how you used it, Basil?' asked Bob.

'Whether I was patient and thought over my sins; or whether I was impatient and only thought about getting better, and the things of this world,' he answered.

'I see now,' replied Bob. 'But, Basil, do you think God will punish me? *I don't mean now*, but when I die? People say, Dick *must* be punished, because he has broken the laws; will God say the same about me?'

Again Basil was puzzled what to answer, so he said, 'Why don't you ask Mr Airdale?'

'Because,' said Bob, 'I would rather talk to you; tell me just what you think. It has so often come into my mind when Dick is talked about.'

'I don't think God will punish you, Bob, because you are sorry,' replied Basil.

'Yes; but if Dick was ever so sorry, he would still be punished,' argued Bob.

'I think I know how it is now,' continued Basil, 'I remember mother once explained it to me: God, she said, could forgive us when we were sorry, because Jesus Christ had been punished for us. She said God forgave us not because we deserved it, but because He was merciful, and Jesus Christ had suffered for us.'

‘But I am sure,’ said Bob, ‘the judge would not forgive Dick, if any body offered to be punished instead.’

‘No, I don’t think he would,’ replied Basil; ‘but God is more merciful than any man; and then, don’t you see, Bob, the judge is not his own master, he is obliged to do as the king bids him, and then he can’t be quite sure that Dick is sorry; but God knows exactly.’

‘I never thought before,’ said Bob, ‘that God was kinder than any man. I always was afraid to think about Him.’

‘Oh! but surely he is,’ said Basil, ‘because He knows every wrong thing we do better than any body else: mother used to say better than we know ourselves, and yet He will forgive us when we are sorry, and make us quite good and happy in heaven.’

‘Yes, that is very good and kind,’ replied Bob; ‘and, I suppose, if God did not love us, He would not think about us at all, or only to punish us, as the judges do.’

‘I think I know a verse about that,’ said Basil: ‘“God so *loved* the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”’ (St. John iii. 16.)

‘That is a pretty verse,’ said Bob, ‘I remember we used to say it at school, but I never thought what it meant.’

Basil did not answer this remark, and Bob called out, ‘I declare it is a shame of me to keep you awake by talking, when you are tired and sleepy. I won’t talk any more—good-night, Basil.’

‘Good-night,’ he replied; and they were soon both asleep.

It is now time that we heard something more of Dick, whom we seem almost to have forgotten during the illness of our little friend. Perhaps we have put away the thought of him because it is a painful one;

but we will not put it away any longer, although, I am sorry to say, we shall still hear nothing but what must pain and grieve us, yet it may do us good, if we will take warning from him.

The first bitter feeling of disgrace had by this time passed away with Dick, and the prison, that had looked so gloomy, was now becoming natural to him. The confinement, of course, he did not like, nor the poor, scanty fare of a prisoner; but these things did not make him sorry, they only made him at times ill-tempered and discontented, while at other times he was lively and jocose among his companions; and the loud laugh and the coarse joke might be heard even within the prison walls. The chaplain of the jail had often talked to Dick and his companions, but with little success; for Crossman always turned what he said into ridicule, as soon as ever he had left them. Notwithstanding all this, you must not think that Dick was happy, no, not even during the loudest mirth, for in spite of himself, he dreaded the coming trial. The public disgrace he could not endure to think of, and yet it would constantly come into his mind, and stop his laugh or joke when he seemed the most careless and indifferent. He suffered more, however, when he lay down upon his straw bed at night. Then a thousand horrible thoughts would crowd into his mind, and after he fell asleep mix themselves with his dreams. He dreamed that the evil one was ever near him, insulting him, and putting him forward to be ridiculed and ill-treated; and yet, with all his efforts, he could not escape, and he would then awake with a start, as though he were really struggling to be free.

Alas! why did he not let these warnings bring him to see that he was indeed in the power of the devil, who was tempting him on to destruction, and would one day drag him in the face of angels and men before the tribunal of God? Why did he so

much dread the earthly judgment-seat, while he will fully put away all thoughts of the judgment-seat of God. In his dreams he could not escape from the power of the evil one; why did he not try to do so in his waking hours by a hearty and sincere repentance? He might have done so then, but he would not!

Several times since his confinement Bob had been to see Dick, whose first question was almost always to ask after Basil. It was strange that he should think of him with kindly thoughts, and yet with all his hardened wickedness he did. A visit to his brother always made Bob unhappy, because he saw no signs of repentance, and Bob had learned that his brother's sin was far greater in the eye of God, even than in that of man, and yet he never felt as if he could speak to Dick, because he thought, 'I was just as bad as Dick before, and he will think I am only making fun if I say anything.' Once he did just venture to ask Dick if he did not feel very unhappy when he thought of his sin; but the reply—'Thought of sin! What do you mean? You are not going to turn preacher, are you? Of course I don't like to be shut up here, or the thought of being transported; I promise you I don't like to think of *that* much'—chilled him, and he durst say no more. Dick's father only entered the prison walls once, and this was a relief to Dick, for there was nothing he dreaded more than his father's reproaches. His poor mother had also seen him once, but it was little that her tears would allow her to say to him.

'And now, boys, I have no time to read more. Next Sunday I will go on with the Story; and we shall then hear of Basil's visit to the prison,' said Miss Walton, as she closed her book.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Sexagesima Sunday.

COLLECT.

O Lord God, who seest that we put not our trust in any thing we do ; mercifully grant that by Thy power we may be defended against all adversity ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

‘Why is this called Sexagesima Sunday?’

Several. Because it is about sixty days before Easter.

Miss W. What did I tell you the word Sexagesima means in Latin?

Edward. Sixtieth.

Miss W. What do you say in the Collect God sees?

All. That we put not our trust in anything that we do.

Miss W. And therefore we pray that by His power we may be—what?

Several. ‘Defended against all adversity.’

Miss W. In several Collects we have prayed to be defended against different things. Can you remember any?

Francis. Yes : ‘in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth Thy right hand to help and defend us.’

Miss W. That is in the Collect for the third Sunday after Epiphany. Can you remember any other?

George. In the fifth Sunday after the Epiphany : ‘that they who do lean only on the hope of Thy

tioned ; there we speak of those who do lean-

‘ Only on the hope of Thy heavenly grace repeated several.

Miss W. Yes, and in to-day’s Collect we say ‘ Lord God’— ?

‘ Who seest that we put not our trust in our arms and strength which we do,’ again they repeated.

Miss W. In both these we speak of relying on God ; in one we profess not to trust in— ?

‘ Anything that *we* can do,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, and in the other to lean— ?

‘ Only on the hope of *God’s* heavenly grace,’ said George.

Miss W. Then in both we go on to pray for what ?

‘ Defended,’ said several.

‘ There is not much that needs explanation in this Collect,’ said Miss Walton ; ‘ but it says some important subjects for thought. And it says God *sees*. Do we speak of His seeing our hearts here, or our *thoughts* ?’

Charley. Our thoughts.

Miss W. Perhaps we had better say feelings

‘That we put not our *trust* in anything we do,’ said Fred.

Miss W. Can you say any verses about God’s all-seeing eye?

George. ‘The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.’ (Prov. xv. 3.)

Miss W. In Job xxxiv. 21, you will find another.

Alfred. ‘For His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings.’

Miss W. Can you not remember any others? I once made you learn verses on this subject. I hope you have not forgotten them.

Edward. ‘For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings.’ (Prov. v. 21.)

Francis. ‘For Mine eyes are upon all their ways : they are not hid from My face, neither is their iniquity hid from Mine eyes.’ (Jer. xvi. 17.)

Alfred. ‘Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight : for all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.’ (Heb. iv. 13.)

Miss W. Very well, boys ; all these texts show us that God’s eye is ever upon us, and that He knows and sees all that we think, or—?

‘Say, or do,’ said Charley.

‘Perhaps, boys,’ said Miss Walton, gravely, ‘if you had remembered this, I should not now have to speak to you about some very bad conduct of which you were guilty after you left the evening school last time.’ As Miss Walton said this, the guilty boys looked down, though they did not speak.

‘I suppose,’ said Miss Walton, ‘because it was dark, you thought nobody would know who said saucy things. But was there no eye upon you, boys?’

‘Yes, ma’am, the eye of God was upon us,’ said Alfred.

‘But you not only *said* saucy things, you threw stones, boys,’ said Miss Walton, ‘at poor Mr Fuller.’

Would you have dared to do so if Mr Walton had been near ?

‘No one would have done it then,’ said Edward.

Miss W. And yet, boys, you did it when God was looking at you. You knew it was wrong, because you would not have dared to do it in the light ; but you dared to do it in the face of God. It is cowardly and cruel, boys, to insult a deformed person ; and both Mr Walton and I are very much displeased to hear that any of you should do such a thing.

When Miss Walton began to speak, she did not know *which* of the boys had insulted and thrown stones at a poor deformed gentleman who occasionally walked through the village, she had only heard *that* some, and some among the first class, had done so on the last night of evening school ; but while she spoke, the downcast eyes of several betrayed them. Still she wished them to confess for themselves, and therefore continued, ‘And now, boys, tell me, each for yourself, who was guilty ?’

At first no one spoke, for the Forley boys never told tales of each other. It was sometimes hard work to make them witness against a boy, even when Mr and Miss Walton desired it. Miss Walton now waited a little while, and then said again, ‘Come, boys, confess for yourselves ; don’t be cowardly, and let the fear of punishment prevent your speaking.’

‘Please, ma’am, I did,’ said Edgar, instantly. When one had spoken, it was easier for the rest. ‘I did,’ said Samuel ; ‘and so did I,’ said Francis, ‘but I did not throw stones.’

‘Well, boys,’ said Miss Walton, ‘I am glad you have told for yourselves ; but very much grieved to find some of you elder ones among them. I thought it could only be little boys, who did it thoughtlessly. When I know who the rest of the boys are, I shall speak to you again. But now tell me, if you had re-

membered that God was looking at you, do you think you would have dared to do so?"

'We did not think about it,' said Francis.

Miss W. No, I suppose you did not; but you all knew very well you were doing wrong?

'Yes, ma'am,' said Francis.

'And now,' continued Miss Walton, 'I have spoken to you and made you read about God seeing you, that you may try and think about it, and remember another time, that whether man sees you or not, God is looking down upon you, and you cannot escape from His eye. "All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Not only did God see your wicked *action* then, but what else?"

'Our thoughts, I suppose,' said Francis.

Miss W. Yes, the thoughts which made you despise the poor man. You thought that he could not help himself, and therefore you might venture to insult him. God knew all that passed in your minds, all was 'naked and open' to Him. Indeed, boys, I am ashamed, very much ashamed of you. You must think about it, and be sorry for your fault, before I speak to you about it again.

Then addressing the other boys, Miss Walton said, 'Let us now proceed with the Collect: God sees that we—?'

'Put not our trust in any thing that we can do,' said Fred.

Miss W. We must look to the end of the Collect to understand this. We pray that we may be defended—?

'Against all adversity,' said several.

Miss W. Can we defend ourselves against all adversities?

All. No.

Miss W. Not being able, then, to defend ourselves, what must we do?

Edward. Pray to God to defend us.

Miss W. What does adversity mean?

Edward. Trouble or sorrow.

Miss W. Can we defend ourselves against the
'No, ma'am,' said several.

Miss W. Look at what St. Paul says he
through, in the Epistle for to-day.

Charley. 'In labours more abundant; in stripes
above measure; in prisons more frequent; in death
oft,' &c., &c.

Miss W. And these were all—what?

Francis. Adversities.

Miss W. Could he save himself from them?

Edward. I suppose not, or else he would not
gone through them.

Miss W. Let us take one example: what does
say he thrice suffered?

Alfred. Shipwreck.

Miss W. Now let us suppose he had taken great
pains to see that the ship was safe before he started
would trusting in that have saved him?

'No; good ships are lost sometimes,' said Francis.

Miss W. Certainly; and when the shipwreck
came, what do you think he would do?

Edward. Try to save himself.

Miss W. Yes, and it would be quite right to do so.
We must always do what we can for ourselves;
would all that he could do save him by itself?

Alfred. No, God must also help him.

Miss W. That is right; he might do what
could, and then trust in whom?

Several. In God.

Miss W. Yes; supposing he caught hold of a
plank, and so kept above water, unless God
helped him, a great wave might have come
washed the plank out of his grasp. We must trust
only in what God does for us; as David speaks
Psalms xlv. 7, 8.

Henry. 'For I will not *trust* in my bow ; it is not my sword that shall help me ; but it is *Thou* that savest us from our enemies, and puttest them to confusion that hate us.'

Miss W. Yes, and again in Psalm xx. 7.

Andrew. 'Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses ; *but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.*'

'There are many other verses,' said Miss Walton, 'which perhaps we may look for when we come to another Collect which is very like this. But now we see that we must not trust for safety in any thing—?'

'We can do,' continued the boys.

Miss W. Of course this must not prevent our doing what we can, at the same time that we must *trust* in God. When God visited this land with cholera, boys, what was done to prevent people taking it?

All. Every thing was made as clean as possible, and people were not allowed to live many together in a house.

Miss W. Yes, and all this was right and proper ; but, after all, who was it that mercifully kept it from this village ?

'Almighty God,' again they all replied.

Miss W. Yes, for in other places where precautions had been taken, it was very bad ; and I hope all here trusted in God while they did what they could themselves. Let us now see how it is the same with regard to the things of the soul. What did our Saviour say about a servant doing his lord's will ? Turn to St. Luke, xvii. 7-11.

James. 'But which of you having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by-and-by, when he is come from the field, go and sit down to meat ? And will not rather say unto him, make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and *serve me till I have eaten and drunken ; and after-*

wards thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things which were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, *when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.*

Miss W. The servants in those days were slaves, and did not work for wages, as servants do in this country. Now we are God's servants: how are we bound to serve Him?

Fred. As well as we can.

Miss W. And when we have done all, we must say—?

Charley. 'We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.'

Miss W. Can we do more than it is our duty to do?

Edward. No, because it is our duty to do every thing we can.

Miss W. Do we deserve to be rewarded for doing simply our duty?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. Yet what has God promised to those who try to do His will?

Alfred. That they shall go to heaven.

Miss W. But when we have done all, we have only—done—?

Francis. What it was our duty to do.

Miss W. And for that you say we do not deserve to be rewarded; how then can we hope to go to heaven?

Several. Through Jesus Christ.

Miss W. But can we even say we have done our best—

George. No, 'for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' (Romans, iii. 23.)

Miss W. What, then, cannot we trust in?

Several. Any thing that we do.

Miss W. Look at what the prophet Isaiah says in our righteousness, Isaiah, lxiv. 6.

Andrew. 'But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.'

Miss W. And again we learn from our Saviour's account of the last day, that the good trust not in their own righteousness. (St. Matt. xxv. 34.) What will our Saviour say to the good?

Edgar. 'Come, ye blessed of my Father;...for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.'

Miss W. And what will they answer?

David. 'Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered and fed Thee? or thirsty and gave Thee drink?' &c.

Miss W. Very well; they will do all these good things; but will they trust in them, or expect to be saved by them?

Several. No.

Miss W. And yet if we neglect to do them, shall we be saved?

George. No; for those who have not done them will be sent into everlasting punishment.

Miss W. We learn, then, that we must do what is right, or we cannot be—?

'Saved,' said Edward.

Miss W. But while we do right, we must not—?

Alfred. Trust in any thing we do.

Miss W. No; because after we have done our utmost, we have come short—?

'Of the glory of God,' replied several.

Miss W. And we are only, what sort of servants?

Andrew. Unprofitable servants.

Miss W. I will give you an example which you will understand. What is your duty towards your parents?

Alfred. To love and obey them.

Miss W. But do you expect them to reward you every time you obey them?

Several. No, we don't.

Miss W. Yet they do reward you sometimes, do they not, by giving you what pleasure they can?

All. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. But if they did not, still would it be your duty to obey them?

Edward. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. So it is with Almighty God. We must try and serve Him as well as we possibly can; but after we have done all, we must be humbled that we have not done better, and must feel that we have done nothing to *deserve* reward, although we hope for it through—?

All. Jesus Christ our Lord.

Miss W. This, then, is what we confess in the Collect; that our best deeds are unprofitable to God (as is said in the book of Job, 'Can a man be profitable unto God...Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to Him that thou makest thy way perfect,') (Job, xxii. 23) and were they ever so good and perfect, still we trust not—?

'In *any thing* that we do,' continued several.

Miss W. Therefore we pray to God, 'Mercifully grant—?'

'That by Thy power we may be defended against all adversity,' repeated Andrew.

Miss W. We say with David, 'It is Thou that savest us from our enemies' (Psalm xliv. 8); and look also at Psalm xviii. 32.

Samuel. 'It is God that girdeth me with strength of war, and maketh my way perfect.'

Miss W. Almost the whole of this psalm shows us how God is our help against all adversity, and that it is in His power, not in our own doings, that we are to trust. You may read the forty-ninth verse.

James. 'It is He that delivereth me from my cruel enemies, and setteth me up above mine adversaries.'

'It is Church-time,' said Miss Walton, shutting her book, 'and I think you have had enough to remember in one lesson, even if it were not.'

In the afternoon Miss Walton went on with the story of Basil.

'We want so much to hear of Basil's visit to Dick,' said the boys.

'Listen, and you will soon be gratified,' replied Miss Walton, beginning to read.

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER IV.—(*Continued.*)

At length Basil was well enough to go out, and the first day he was able, he begged that he might be allowed to visit Dick. No one objected, and he and Bob set off. It was with a strange mixture of feelings that he entered the prison. He had never been in one before, and a cold chill ran through him as the ponderous gates shut upon him; for though Basil was brave in doing right, and often showed much courage, he was *naturally* of a timid disposition. Then he thought how miserable Dick must be, and could hardly believe his ears when, on approaching the room where the gang was confined, he heard the sounds of laughter, for Basil knew not that misery could be hidden under apparent mirth. The door was unlocked by the jailor to let Basil and Bob enter, and was again fastened behind them. The grating sound of the many bolts made Basil start with almost a dread that he should not get out again, and then he turned quite pale at the sight of the hand cuffed group before him. He could not distinguish Dick at first, but Dick in a moment perceived him, and coming forward, took him as well as he could by the

hand, and said, 'How are you Basil, boy? I am glad to see you. We can, you see, be very merry here but while he spoke, he turned his head away, for he could not bear Basil's pitying gaze; and if any one could have looked into his heart that moment, they would have said, 'Merry you may *seem* to be; but miserable, *most miserable*, you really are.' All this passed in less time than we have taken to tell it, and almost before Dick had spoken, Basil felt ashamed of his momentary fear. He answered Dick quite naturally, 'Indeed, I am surprised to hear that you can laugh, I thought you would be very miserable. The rest of the party then came round, asking many questions about the town, and how things were going on. Basil longed to talk to Dick alone, but he could not get any chance. 'You managed well,' said one of them to Basil, 'not to get amongst us. I expect you knew that there were watchers.'

'If I thought he did,' said Crossman, 'he should repent it yet.'

Dick hastened to assure them that such a thing was not possible, for he really feared Crossman's violence. Basil was not sorry when the jailor came to take them away. Just as he left the room he contrived to whisper to Dick, 'Oh! Dick, I wish I could help you! I am *so sorry* for you.'

'Who knows but you may?' was the reply, and they were obliged to part.

'Can Basil help me,' thought Dick, when he was left alone again; and the devil answered, 'Yes, perhaps he may, if you can persuade him to tell a lie.'

The idea once in Dick's mind, he soon formed his plans, and was determined, the next time Basil called, to sound him. It was, however, some weeks before he had a chance. Basil's time was very much occupied, as he was trying, by hard work, in some degree to make up for his necessary idleness during *his sickness*, and when his day's work was over the

hour was passed when he could be admitted into the prison.

During the time that Dick waited for Basil's visit, we may forget him, and turn to the brighter picture of the daily life of the two friends. We questioned, a while ago, how Bob would act when the first pain of Dick's misconduct had passed away, and when Basil should be well, and all things have returned to their natural course. Let us then see for ourselves. Basil *was* well, though not perhaps quite as strong as formerly, and he and Bob worked together as they had done a few weeks before. A new foreman had been hired, a good-tempered, easy sort of man, who overlooked them, and Hardman spent his time between the shop and the working-room, so that every thing seemed to have returned to its old course as far as concerned the two boys.

But, no! *everything* had not; Bob was not the same. When his father left the room, he did not now jump from his seat, or throw down his work, and begin to talk, nor did he carelessly hurry over what he was doing, regardless of *how* it was done; but side by side he and Basil sat, steadily and busily employed. It was at first very hard for Bob to do this; for sitting still, under almost any circumstances, was a punishment to him. Mr Airdale, however, had told him he must try and make up for his former idleness by being now very industrious, and he therefore *did* try. Even Hardman noticed a change, and praised the improved work of poor Bob; and this repaid him for the struggle it had cost him. At other times, when Hardman was harsh or unjust, Bob had to struggle very hard to keep down angry feelings or impatient words. It was something new for him to struggle, and he found that the way he had chosen was not always quite easy. He had to undo much, as well as much to learn anew, and he found constant care and watchfulness necessary to do this; still, notwithstand-

ing all his care, he fell at times, and then followed the bitterness of repentance, and sometimes the temptation to give up altogether. One evening he and Basil were amusing themselves by throwing a ball one to the other, and trying how far and how violently they could throw it, when Sam Burton, a rough, ill-natured boy, came up to them and stood by watching. He had formerly been a constant companion of Bob's, but soon after Basil had come to Hardman's, Bob had gone less with him, and within the last few weeks had decidedly separated from his company, finding it hardly possible to do right, at the same time that he associated with this boy. He had tried not to be uncivil to him while avoiding his company. But in spite of his endeavours, the change had made Sam angry, and it was with no very kindly feelings that he now stood by them. He hated Basil, because he attributed Bob's change to him, and also because, from the first, Basil had kept aloof from him; and he was angry with Bob for being 'fool enough,' as he expressed it, to be led by Basil, and forsake him.

When he stopped to watch them, Bob just said, coldly, 'Good evening!' and went on with his play; but, perhaps from not feeling very comfortable, he continually missed catching the ball from the time Sam stood by them. Sam began to laugh at him in an ill-natured way. 'A child of three years old could have caught that, Bob,' he said; and then again, 'Why, boy, are you asleep? I declare the ball comes into your hand, and you let it fall again;' and many other things in the most provoking tone possible. Bob's anger began to rise, as was instantly visible by his flushed face and fiery eye. Basil saw it, and throwing down the ball, said, 'Come, let us go.'

Sam burst out laughing, and said, 'Come, dear

Bob, come! of course you'll do whatever your dear friend bids you.'

Basil also now felt angry, but he checked himself, and said, 'Sam Burton, I should be much obliged if you would leave us; you have disturbed us in our game in a way you have no right to do.'

'Then I sha'n't leave you,' was the reply. 'I don't wish to oblige you, and I have as much right here as you have.'

Basil felt his anger again rising almost beyond control, but not quite; for he had long learnt to rule his temper.

Bob, in the meantime, had been struggling hard to keep down anger, and had thus far, with difficulty, restrained himself.

Basil now turned again to him, and said, 'If Sam won't go, we must; come, let us go, Bob.'

He was just about to yield, when he happened to catch a glance of Sam's face, who stood by, looking very scornful. This was too much for Bob, and drawing himself up, said, 'I shall not go; we have as much right here as Sam has; and I am not going to be bullied away by any body.'

Basil looked distressed, for he was almost afraid to trust himself to stay, and yet he feared to leave Bob, feeling sure the two would quarrel if he did.

'That is right,' said Sam, in reply to Bob's determination. 'You'll be a man yet, I believe, and not be led by that sneaking boy.'

When this was said, Basil felt he could no longer trust himself to stay, whatever the consequence might be to Bob; so once more facing Sam, 'You want to provoke me to fight,' he said; 'but I'm not going to, and I shall leave you, whether Bob goes or not;' and then giving an imploring look towards Bob, he started.

Bob longed to follow, but his pride would not let him, and while he was trying to battle against his

temper, he forgot to resist his pride ; and thus giving way to it, he had no longer any strength.

As Basil turned away, Sam called out, ‘Go, coward!’ and taking up the ball which lay near him, he threw it violently after Basil, and hit him severely on one leg, and then asked Bob, with an air of triumph, ‘How long are you going to be led by that boy?’

Bob could not stand this, and, forgetting his resolution not to be angry, he flew at Sam, and gave him a violent blow, and they instantly closed in fight. Sam was much the stronger boy ; but Bob, now thoroughly roused, forgot every thing but the insults he and Basil had received, and blow succeeded blow, till something serious would probably have happened, had not two men coming by parted them, and, threatening them both with the policeman, sent them home.

Basil having turned a corner before the fight began, knew not that his fears were realized, and hoped every minute he should see Bob following him. He arrived, however, at home without doing so, and then loitered about, watching for his return. Bob soon made his appearance, and Basil saw instantly that something was the matter, and running up to Bob, he asked what had happened.

‘Oh, leave me, Basil,’ was the reply ; ‘I am so wretched ! I have been fighting. Do not talk to me now ;’ and turning abruptly away, he entered the house, proceeded to his own room, and, throwing himself upon a chair, began to think, ‘What have I been doing?’

Basil longed to follow, but thought perhaps he had better not, after what Bob had said ; so he walked about, feeling very disconsolate, and left Bob to his own meditations ; and very miserable they were. The whole scene was now changed to his mind, and *nothing* but the sinfulness of his own conduct stood

out before him. 'Why could not I,' he thought, 'have left when Basil first proposed going? then I should never have come to this. I had so determined I would not be angry and fight, and yet I did.' Then the tempter whispered into his heart, 'It is no use your trying to be good. You have tried hard enough to-day, and yet you have not succeeded;' and Bob listened to the tempter, hardly knowing what he was doing. True, the thought made him miserably unhappy; for he had begun to find that the way of holiness, notwithstanding many difficulties, was a way of pleasantness, and all her paths were peace; and yet now, beautiful as the way still seemed, the tempter whispered that it was not for him. Basil had succeeded in doing right, but he had not; it was therefore plain that he never could. And this thought, in his wretchedness, he cherished. Instead of looking into himself, and trying to find out why he had fallen, and how he had acted differently from Basil, in resisting the temptation, he gave way to this feeling of miserable despair. In this state he was when Basil, liking to stay away from his friend no longer, followed him up stairs, and, knocking gently at the door, asked if he might come in.

'Yes,' said Bob, 'you may come in.' Basil entered, and putting his arm round Bob, sat down with him on the same chair, saying, 'Bob, dear Bob, what is the matter? do not look so unhappy.'

Bob then told him all that had happened, finishing by saying, in a tone of misery, 'It is no use my trying to be good, Basil; you see it is not. I tried not to get angry, and you tried; you succeeded, and I did not; you can be good, but I can't, Basil.'

'Oh! don't say that, Bob,' replied Basil. 'Indeed, you can be good. You were not angry for a long time; and if you had only come away, you would not have fought.'

‘I did not choose to go away,’ he replied. ‘Sam had no right to come and turn us away.’

‘No, I know he had no *right*,’ replied Basil; ‘but—but—I believe we ought not to mind that. Mother used to say it was better to take wrong than to do wrong.’

‘Well, it could not be wrong to stay; and I did not like to go away when I saw how Sam looked,’ replied Bob again. ‘There was something would not let me. *You* did not mind going, but *I* did; yet I still tried, Basil, not to get angry, but it is no use my trying;’ and then he sighed, for he felt really persuaded that this was the case, and his soul was sore troubled by the thought. And if poor Bob had now been left to himself, it is probable that this feeling would have increased, and the evil one who first put it into his mind, would have gone on tempting him by little and little to return into the ways of sin. ‘You have done your best,’ he whispered, over and over again, ‘and yet you have failed. God is angry with you, and you have no hope.’ But God would not let him sink in this hour of his soul’s adversity, but in His mercy defended him.

Basil knew not what to answer to this last remark of Bob’s; but at length he said, ‘I don’t know what to say to you, Bob; but will you tell Mr Airdale, and talk to him?’

‘Oh, I forgot to tell you,’ replied Bob; ‘I am sure one of the men who stopped us fighting was Mr Airdale’s man, and he will tell him all about it; and what will he think? he will never have any thing more to do with me, I am sure. I don’t think I shall go to him any more.’

Basil kindly and earnestly entreated him not to say this, and at length Bob promised he would go as usual the next evening, and if Mr Airdale said any thing about it, he would tell him all.

The next evening came, and it was with a beating

heart that Bob entered Mr Airdale's study. Basil was with him, for he durst not go alone; and the moment Mr Airdale entered, they both felt sure, by his grave look, that he knew all.

'You may go into the kitchen for a little while, Basil,' was the first thing Mr Airdale said. 'I want to speak to Robert.'

Basil instantly obeyed, and Bob trembled as he stood waiting for Mr Airdale to speak, expecting every moment to hear him say he would have nothing more to do with him. What was his surprise, then, when Mr Airdale said, in the kindest tone possible, 'Robert, I am glad to see you here. I hope it is a sign of repentance. Will you now tell me all about your quarrel with Sam Burton yesterday?' His manner instantly removed all Bob's fears, and he began, and told him unreservedly the whole history. He told him all that had passed in his mind, and how much better Basil had behaved than he had, and the feeling that prevented his leaving when Basil proposed doing so; and then concluded by saying, 'And now, sir, I feel as if it was no use my trying to be good. I am very, very unhappy; but I can't do better.'

'Do not say that, my boy,' replied Mr Airdale; 'rather let us find out why, though you tried to do right, you did not succeed.'

'That I can't tell, sir,' answered Bob.

'Perhaps I can help you,' continued Mr Airdale. 'When Basil first proposed to you to go, did you not feel that it was the only safe thing for you to do?'

'I did not think whether it was safe. I would rather have left. But when I saw Sam's scornful look, I did not like to go. I thought he would think me cowardly and mean-spirited.'

'And therefore you stayed, trusting that you would be able to keep your temper?'

'Why, yes, sir, I thought I could; and I tried, too.'

‘But you did not take the only sure means—going out of the way of temptation.’

Bob blushed, and for the first time the truth began to show itself. ‘No, sir,’ he said; ‘I didn’t go, because I didn’t like to be bullied by Sam.’

‘And now, Robert,’ continued Mr Airdale, ‘can you any longer say that you *could’nt* do better? Why did you let your pride conquer while you battled against anger? When it was proposed that you should leave the scene of temptation, why did you let any foolish feeling of pride prevent you. You did not allow yourself to think whether you ought to stay, but you yielded at once, without a struggle. The devil is very cunning, Robert; when he finds you resisting in one point, he attacks you at another; and now he is trying to make you despair, to persuade you that you cannot do better, and therefore may as well give up trying; whereas you have a loving Father, who is willing to receive your confession of sorrow for this your fault, and to strengthen you against all your enemies.’

‘Indeed, sir,’ said Bob, now that the truth had been put before him, ‘I see that I might have done better; but I never thought that it was pride which prevented my going. Oh! sir, I am very sorry. Do you really think I may go on trying to be good?’

‘You not only may, but you must, my dear boy; and while you do your best, trust not in your own strength, nor in any thing that you can do, but seek for help and guidance from Him who is your only defence against all adversity.’

Mr Airdale then told him that he must watch against that pride of heart which dreads the scorn of the world; showing him how, when his blessed Saviour was reviled, he reviled not again; how St. Peter, when he repented, did not trust himself to remain among those who had tempted him, but *went out* and wept bitterly; and lastly, that he must never

to the devil when he tempted him to despair, at was the way to lead him back into the paths

ry glad was poor Bob when he knelt in prayer evening that he had spoken to Mr Airdale; for h his sorrow was deeper, and his sense of the f his conduct clearer and fuller, he no longer inclined to despair; but while he sorrowed, he ; while he confessed his faults, he resolved to id do better for the future. Nor were his reso- s in vain. This one fault had taught him more nself. He knew better in future how to watch lf on all sides; he learnt to distrust himself and so to keep, or go, out of the way of temp- , and when he did fall, he knew better how to ut the cause, and that his sin must not make lespair, but rather try more earnestly. And so, in hand with Basil, he persevered in the way of ss, and they helped each other, and strengthen- ch other, along the path of life, choosing ever arrow way which leadeth to eternal glory.

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Quinquagesima Sunday.

COLLECT.

O Lord, who hast taught us, that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; Send Thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee: Grant this for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

ON the night of the evening school which followed the misconduct of the boys, when they were all duly assembled, Mr Walton entered the room, and pursuing the same plan as Miss Walton had done on the previous Sunday, asked the boys how many of them had insulted Mr Fuller the week before. 'I know,' he said, 'how many of the first-class there were, because they told Miss Walton on Sunday; and now I hope the rest of you will do the same.'

As Mr Walton spoke, the guilty boys glanced at each other, as if to inquire who would speak first, and at length Matthew Daman venturing to say, 'please, sir, I "hallooed" at him,' several others followed his example, and confessed that they had been in the affray.

'Now, do I know all?' asked Mr Walton.

'Yes, sir,' answered several.

'I am glad I do,' returned Mr Walton. 'Now tell me, boys, did you not all know that you were doing wrong?'

‘Yes, sir,’ they murmured.

‘And do you not think you all deserve to be punished?’ he asked.

All were silent except Francis, who again whispered, ‘Yes, sir.’

‘But will punishing you, boys, at all lessen the pain and annoyance you must have given to Mr Fuller?’

‘No, sir, I suppose not,’ answered Matthew.

‘Can you tell me any way in which you could all make up to him for what you have done?’ asked Mr Walton.

‘By not doing it any more,’ replied Francis.

‘I am afraid that wo’nt do,’ returned Mr Walton. ‘If any thing had been stolen from you, would the thief’s stealing no more make up to you for what you had lost?’

‘No, sir,’ they all answered.

‘No,’ said Mr Walton; ‘neither will abstaining from insulting Mr Fuller make up for what you have already done. Do you all wish, boys, to make up to him as much as you can for your fault?’

‘Yes, sir,’ they all answered.

‘Then I will tell you what you must do,’ continued Mr Walton. ‘You must go in a body and tell Mr Fuller that you are sorry for your misconduct, and that you will not do so again. Will you do this?’

The boys were surprised, and did not answer, evidently not liking the idea; so Mr Walton went on talking to them for a little while. ‘Which of you,’ he said, ‘can tell me what the Collect is about for next Sunday?’

‘Charity,’ replied several.

‘And do you remember how St. Paul explains what charity is? Listen, while I read to you something of what he says. “Charity,” he says, “suffereth long, and is kind.” Charity “is not puffed up.” Charity “doth not behave itself unseemly.”

Charity "thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity;" and without this charity, he says, "we are nothing." Now just think, boys, how, by your late conduct, you broke the law of charity. First of all, were you kind to Mr Fuller?

'No, sir,' returned all.

'Then,' proceeded Mr Walton, 'you were puffed up yourselves, and despised him for being deformed; and was your behaviour seemly?'

'No, sir,' they again replied.

'Indeed, it was not; you chose the dark, because you knew that your conduct was unseemly.' Then he asked, 'Did you not also think evil?'

'I suppose we did,' replied Francis.

'Your thoughts must have been evil, because the sancy things you said expressed your *evil thoughts*. And once more,' said Mr Walton, 'I ask, was it pain or pleasure to you to do as you did?'

'It was not pain, or else we should not have done it,' said several.

'What were you then rejoicing in?'

'Iniquity,' said Francis.

'Indeed, boys,' resumed Mr Walton, 'I fear all this is true, and you have grievously sinned, not only against Mr Fuller, but against God. You cannot make up to *Him* for your fault. He will forgive you if you are really sorry; but you cannot do any thing to repair your fault towards Almighty God, whatever you can do towards man; and now, while you have been so unkind towards Mr Fuller, what do you think he has been doing? begging of me to forgive you, and not to punish you. He is charitable to you, although you were so uncharitable to him.'

'Oh! please, sir,' said Francis and several of the others, 'we will go and tell him that we are sorry.'

'You will all do this, boys, will you?' said Mr Walton.

'Yes, sir,' they answered.

‘That is right,’ said Mr Walton, really pleased with their determination. ‘It is the only thing you can do now, to show that you are really sorry; and will not do the same again; and when you have done this, you may hope that God will also forgive you, if you ask Him to do so with real sorrow. I will go with you now,’ he continued, ‘if you like, and the only punishment I shall give you, is not allowing you to come back to school to-night. When we have been up to him, you must go home.’

‘Thank you, sir,’ said the boys, and taking their caps, they set off with Mr Walton to Mr Fuller’s house. We need not say that he forgave them, after the kindly feeling he had already shown. He also said that he was very much pleased with them for coming to him, and that now he should not dislike going down into Forley. From that time he was constantly to be seen at the week-day services in the little church; nor was he again molested by any of the boys.

The first class being all assembled on the following Sunday, except Henry, of whom nobody could give an account, and the Collect being well said, for it was a favourite with the Forley boys (Charley called it ‘a pretty Collect’), Miss Walton proceeded to question them as usual.

‘Who do we say has taught us about Charity?’ she asked.

‘God,’ they all answered.

Miss W. And where has He taught us?

All. In the Bible.

Miss W. What do we say that He has taught us?

Several. ‘That all our doings, without charity, are nothing worth.’

Miss W. Where is this most directly taught?

George. In the Epistle for to-day.

Miss W. ‘Without charity,’ St. Paul says, ‘though

he speaks with the tongue of men and of angels, he becomes as'—what?

Several. 'Sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.'

Miss W. Yes; his words would convey no more real meaning; they would become an empty sound. Do you know what a cymbal is?

'No, ma'am,' said several.

Miss W. It is a three-sided instrument, with rings upon it.

Edward. Oh, yes, I know; I once heard one played along with other instruments.

Miss W. Is there any music in this by itself?

Edward. No; it is always played with other instruments, is it not?

Miss W. Yes, as an accompaniment; alone it is nothing. Even so, every thing without charity, is'—?

Alfred. 'Nothing worth.'

Miss W. St. Paul goes on: 'Though I have the gift of prophecy'—

'And understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing,' repeated Fred.

Miss W. And again, 'Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity'—?

'It profiteth me nothing,' continued Francis.

Miss W. What, then, is charity, boys?

'Love,' they answered.

Miss W. Love to whom?

Edward. Both God and man.

Miss W. Yes, as our Saviour teaches us. When asked which was the greatest commandment, what did He answer?

George. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first, and great commandment. And the second is like unto it.' Thou shalt love thy

neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' (St. Matt. xxii., 37-40.)

Miss W. Love is the greatest of the virtues, so, the greatest of the commandments is that which commands us to love—whom?

Several. Both God and man.

Miss W. And, as to love, is the first or most important of the commandments, so love is the end of the law, as we learn in 1 Tim., i. 5.

Andrew. 'Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.'

Miss W. Having, then, acknowledged, in the Collect, that all our doings without charity, are nothing worth, what do we go on to pray?

All. 'Send Thy Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity.'

Miss W. Why do we say *pour*?

'Because we want so much of it,' replied Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, because we need it without measure. What sort of a gift is charity called?

Andrew. Most excellent.

Miss W. What do you mean by *excellent*?

Edward. Excelling or going beyond all other gifts.

Miss W. Whom does the gift of charity come from?

Edward. God.

Miss W. As St John says. (1 St. John, iv. 7.)

Samuel. 'Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.'

Miss W. Therefore we pray to God to send unto us—what?

Several. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Yes, and with the Holy Spirit will come charity; for what is the fruit of the Spirit?

George. 'The fruit of the Spirit is love.' (Gal. v. 22)

Miss W. Very well; love or charity comes from God, and whom does it lead to?

Alfred. It leads to God.

Miss W. As St. John says again, chapter iv. 16.

David. '*He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*'

Miss W. And look what our Saviour himself says in John, xiv. 23.

James. 'If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.'

Miss W. Charity, then, is the most excellent gift, because it comes—?

'From God,' said Edward.

Miss W. And leads—?

'To God,' again replied the boys.

Miss W. For God Himself is—what?

Charley. 'God is love.' (1 St. John, iv. 8, 16.)

Miss W. Yes; and therefore 'every one that loveth, is born of God and knoweth God.' Look again at verses 12 and 13.

Fred. 'If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.'

Miss W. And His Spirit is the Spirit of—what?

Edward. Love.

Miss W. Inasmuch as God is love, the Spirit of God is love. We, therefore, dwelling in love, dwell in—?

'God,' said several.

Miss W. And He dwells in us by His—?

'Holy Spirit,' again they replied.

Miss W. Charity is also most excellent for another reason. What is said at the end of the Epistle for to-day?

Francis. 'Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.'

Miss W. What is it which we must have faith in?
George. What God promises.

Miss W. And when the promises are fulfilled we need faith any more?

‘No, ma’am,’ answered several.

Miss W. It is the same with hope; what is hope for? Not what we have got, but what—

‘Is to come,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Then when we have obtained our promises we need hope no more. God has promised us in heaven; and these promises we must—?

‘Believe,’ said several.

Miss W. But we have not reached them yet only—?

‘Hope for them,’ said Francis.

Miss W. But when we are really in heaven, we need to believe, or hope any longer?

Alfred. No, we shall have got that which we believed in, and hoped for.

Miss W. But, now, how is it with love? we cease to love in heaven?

‘Oh, no! we shall love God for ever,’ said Charles.

Miss W. Just so; then faith and hope will last, but love will last and increase—how long?

‘For ever,’ said several. ‘Charity never fails.’

Miss W. Therefore love among gifts is—?

‘The most excellent,’ again they replied.

Miss W. What else is said of charity beside that it is ‘most excellent’?

All. That it is the very bond of peace and of all virtues.

Miss W. We will now see how charity is the bond of peace, and as we proceed, we shall come to see how excellent is charity. You say ‘charity’ we mean love both to—?

Several. God and man.

Miss W. What does St. Paul say that love is?
Rom. xiii. 10?

Andrew. 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore *love is the fulfilling of the law.*'

Miss W. If we loved God perfectly, do you think we should do any thing to displease Him?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. How is it that we forget Him, and disobey His commands?

Charley. Because we do not love Him as we ought.

Miss W. When a person you love asks you to do any thing, is it a trouble to you to do it?

Alfred. No, ma'am; we like to do things for people whom we love.

Miss W. Then if we loved God perfectly, how should we do His will?

'We should like to do it,' said several.

Miss W. Should we be any more tempted to displease Him?

Charley. No, ma'am, we should like to please Him.

Miss W. Yes, even as the Holy Angels do. We see, then, that if we loved God perfectly, we should fulfil the law towards Him; and we shall find it the same with respect to man. When children love their parents very much, do they grieve and disobey them?

'No, they try to please them,' said James.

Miss W. And would any one murder a person they loved?

'Oh, no!' cried several.

Miss W. What generally comes before murder?

Edward. Hatred.

Miss W. Yes, Cain hated his brother before he murdered him. Or would people steal from those they love?

All. No.

'So it is,' continued Miss Walton, 'with all the commandments; if we loved our neighbours as ourselves, we should not be even tempted to break them. Charity, then, is justly called'—?

‘The very bond of peace and of all virtues,’ said several.

‘Yes,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘love would bind us to God and our neighbours, so that there would be no more disobedience, no more anger, no more ill-will; for charity suffereth long, and is kind;’—

‘Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth: beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things,’ repeated the boys.

Miss W. It is called the bond of peace, then, because it binds us in—what?

‘In peace,’ said several.

Miss W. In peace both with—?

‘God and man,’ again they replied.

Miss W. And it is the bond of all virtues, because, take away love, and what follows?

Edward. Hatred, and wrath, and anger.

Miss W. Yes, and every sin. The devils are without love, and where they are, it is hell. Without love this world would soon become a hell. But perfect love would make it like—?

‘Heaven,’ answered some.

Miss W. Because what does it bind together?

Several. All virtues.

Miss W. And what is the last thing we say about charity.

Francis. ‘Without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee.’

Miss W. Look at 1 St. John, iii. 14.

Edgar. ‘He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.’

Miss W. And again, iv. 8.

Samuel. ‘He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.’

W. If, then, we are without love, we are to whom?

ard. Without God, for 'God is love.'

W. And can we live 'without God?'

ral. No, ma'am.

W. What will be the second death, the first of the soul, but being sent away—from whom?

ed. From God.

W. If God does not dwell with us, and in us, we *re outwardly live*, we are but *dead*, and prepared for eternal death hereafter. And will God dwell with those who indulge anger, or hatred, or unkind feeling?

ral. No, ma'am.

W. What does St. James say goes along with envy and strife.

ge. 'There is confusion, and every evil work. James, iii. 16.)

W. Now look what the prophet Habakkuk says, chap. i. 13.

ed. 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.'

W. Then God will only dwell with—whom?

ral. With the pure and holy.

W. And can we be pure and holy without God?

No, ma'am.

W. Then if we live without charity, we live without God, or, as the Collect says, 'while we live in sin—?'

'as if dead before God,' said Andrew.

W. But, on the other hand, if we dwell in sin, and dwell—?

God,' they replied.

W. And dwelling in Him, we are not dead—

ing,' again they answered.

W. Yes, alive in Him who is the life, and is

love. Now, then, having gone through the Collect, and seen why charity is most excellent, because it—?

‘Comes from God, and leads to God,’ said Edward.

Miss W. And because, while faith and hope come to an end, charity—?

‘Never faileth,’ said Francis.

Miss W. And because it is the fulfilling of the law, and binds us in—what?

Fred. In peace, to God and man.

Miss W. ‘And in all virtue, in everything that is—?’

‘Good,’ said Alfred.

‘And because,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘without it, while we live we are—?’

‘But dead before God,’ answered several.

‘Very well, having, then, thus gone through the Collect,’ said Miss Walton, ‘we must now go on, boys, to see some of the many ways in which we are to practise this greatest of virtues; and, first, we must pray for it—pray to God to send—?’

All. His Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity.

Miss W. We must pray for it, because it is heavenly, and the gift of God, and we must strive after it ourselves, because, without it, we can never be fit to dwell in heaven, where all is love. There are many ways, boys, in which you can be charitable. Can you tell me any?

‘By being kind,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, kind to those you are with; and this is one of the first things mentioned about charity.

George. ‘Charity suffereth long, and is *kind*.’

Miss W. Most of you have little brothers or sisters: do they not sometimes tease you?

‘I should think they do,’ replied several.

‘I am sure,’ said Charley, ‘little Adam lets me have no peace sometimes. He wants to do all he sees me doing.’

Miss W. Then here is an opportunity of being charitable. If you get angry with your little brothers, boys, is that suffering long?

Charley hung down his head, for he knew that he sometimes did get angry; and then said, 'But he is so tiresome.'

Miss W. Yes, Charley, and I have no doubt it is a trial to you, but you must all try and suffer, or bear, these things without being angry; and you must not only do this, but you must be actively kind also. You must give up your own wills, and let your little brothers do what they wish sometimes. Supposing you were little, don't you think you would like to fly a kite or spin a top, if you saw your elder brothers doing so?

'Yes, I suppose we should,' said several.

Miss W. Then it would only be kind of you to let your little brothers or sisters join in your amusements sometimes. And what, boys, have I heard you say when it has been proposed to take the little children walking with us?

They did not answer, so Miss Walton said again. 'Are you ashamed of repeating it?'

'We have said,' replied Francis, 'that there was no fun going with them, for they walk so slowly.'

Miss W. And is this kind, boys?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. Indeed it is not. 'Charity seeketh not her own,' but you often forget this, and seek nothing but your own pleasure. This is not charity, boys. And there is another way in which you often *seek your own*. When any of your family are sick, do they like a noise being made?

'No,' said James; 'mother often asks us to be quiet, for she has got a headache.'

Miss W. 'Yes, if you have the charity that seeketh not her own,' you would try to be quiet and gentle. There is no better way of showing true

charity, than by a kind consideration for others. When your fathers come in tired from their work, and they want to go to sleep, what must you do?

‘Not make a noise,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, you must consider them before yourselves. I am afraid you all fail in this. You do not consider your parents’ wishes and fancies as you ought, and as charity would teach you to do. And now that I have told you of these two ways in which you can strive after this heavenly gift, I hope you will remember them, and not consider yourselves first, and others second. But there is one more thing I would mention. Can you not be kind to the poor?

‘Please, ma’am, we have no money to give,’ said Fred.

Miss W. No; but there are other ways in which you can be kind. Old people cannot see to read; what might you do for them?

‘Read to them,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, and sick people, when they lie in bed for a long time, like others to go in and speak to them sometimes. Could not you do this?

‘Poor Joseph Harrison used to like me to go in and see him,’ replied Edward.

Miss W. Yes, boys, in this way you can all of you be charitable, for there are none of you who, sometime or other, have not friends, old or sick, who like to be read to, and visited. And your fathers like you to read to them in an evening; this, too, you should do willingly and cheerfully. If you are really trying to be charitable, you will find plenty of opportunities, and you must try to do all from love to God, which is the first part of true charity.

‘Please, ma’am, it is half-past ten,’ whispered Charley.

‘Yes, it is quite time to stop,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘I did not know how quickly time was going.’

In the afternoon Miss Walton read the concluding chapter of Basil to the boys, although she said it had not much to do with the Collect.

BASIL AND HIS DIFFICULTIES.

CHAPTER V.

ONCE more we must return to Dick before we finally take leave of Basil and his companions. After some time had elapsed, Dick had an opportunity of sending a message to Basil, saying how much he should like to see him, and the next day Basil asked Hardman's leave to go.

'Yes,' he said, 'you may go, for it is not often more that you'll see him, I expect. The assizes come on next week, and there is not a chance of his escaping. Little did I think,' he continued, with bitterness, 'that one of my sons would ever come to this; a father's curse will go with him.'

Basil was turning away from the sound of such fearful words, when, suddenly checking himself, and regardless of the natural dread he felt for Hardman, he caught him by the hand, and said, 'Oh, do not say so! forgive poor Dick, or he never can be happy.'

'He does not deserve to be,' was Hardman's reply; 'and you, Basil, have surely no cause to love him.'

'He used to be very kind to me,' replied Basil; 'I do love him, and will not you? just say you'll forgive him, and then perhaps he can bear his punishment better.'

'Never, Basil. Don't talk to me any more, but go along with you,' said Hardman, turning away as he spoke.

Basil felt he could do no more, and slowly returned to the workshop to ask Bob to go with him, as Hardman had said he might. When they entered the prison this time, Basil felt no fear, but he was far

more unhappy than on his former visit, for Hardman's 'never' still sounded in his ears. They reached the room where the gang was confined, and Dick again came forward to meet them, and upbraided them with the length of time it was since they had been before. Basil felt sorry, and thought he ought to have made an effort to come sooner.

'And now,' said Dick, in an under tone to Bob, 'will you go and talk to the rest of them? I want to speak to Basil.'

Bob complied, and drawing Basil to one side, Dick said, eagerly, 'Basil, you said you would like to help me, and I've been thinking that perhaps you can, and if you love me, I'm sure you will.'

'What can I do?' asked Basil.

'Will you promise me to do it?' asked Dick.

'Indeed, Dick, I cannot tell,' replied Basil, cautiously, remembering the way in which Dick had led him on before. 'I will not promise you any thing until I know what it is you want.'

'Why,' replied Dick, 'I know you would not tell a lie to please yourself, but you won't mind saying what is not quite true to save me, I am sure.' Basil was going to reply, but Dick stopped him, and said, 'Now hear me, Basil, before you answer. All I want you to do is, to appear for me, and to say that you think I was not willing to go; you don't know that it was not so. Say that Crossman forced me into the house; you can say, if you like, that you saw him.'

'Dick, stop!' cried Basil; 'you know I cannot possibly do it. I cannot tell a lie, even if it would save you, which I am perfectly sure it would not. There are too many witnesses *against* you for any thing I could say *for* you, to be believed.'

'You can't be sure of that,' replied Dick; 'and you don't mean, Basil, that you'll appear against me?'
99?

‘Indeed, I won’t, if I can possibly help it,’ replied Basil.

‘You *can* help it, if you’ll do as I want you to. If you appear for me, you won’t have to appear against me.’

‘Dick, I cannot; I dare not tell a lie. I would give anything not to appear against you, but I will not do wrong.’

‘You dare not? You won’t, you mean,’ replied Dick, half angrily, half persuasively. ‘Oh, Basil! I didn’t think you would be so unkind. I am sure to be transported, if you won’t try to prevent it.’

‘It is not that I won’t,’ said Basil, greatly distressed; ‘but I must not, I dare not sin against God; and oh, Dick!’ he continued with great earnestness, ‘instead of asking me to do any thing so wicked, do rather be sorry for what you have done wrong, and you’ll not find your punishment so hard to bear then.’

‘Well, I will be sorry, and be quite good if you’ll only appear for me now,’ pleaded Dick, thinking that perhaps the hope of his doing better would help to persuade Basil. It did not however at all persuade him, but it puzzled him; for he could not understand how Dick could promise he would be sorry, if he were not so already. He did not answer just at first, and Dick began to fancy he was relenting, and went on to say, ‘You see, Basil, I can’t be good here, but if I was with you again, you could help me; now surely you will try.’

During this, Basil had been collecting his thoughts, and once more replied, ‘Nothing, Dick, shall persuade me to do what is so wicked, and I am certain you would not be any better, if you got free unjustly. But, Dick,’ he said again, with great kindness, ‘you can be good now, if you’ll only repent and try.’

‘But I won’t,’ answered Dick, rising in evident

anger. 'I thought you would have helped me,' he continued, 'but as you won't, I'll stand none of your preaching.'

His words attracted the rest, and they eagerly inquired what it was all about.

'Nothing, nothing,' replied Dick, fearing Basil should tell what he had been proposing: 'it was only some private business, so be quiet, will you?'

It was not however so easy to quiet them, and Basil was assailed with many questions, none of which he would answer, to Dick's great relief. At length this painful scene was ended by the jailor's return.

'Dick, do forgive me, and let us not part in anger,' said Basil, hurriedly, as he was taking leave.

'I'm not angry,' quickly answered Dick, 'for you have not betrayed me. Good-bye, Basil.'

These few words were the greatest comfort to poor Basil; for to have parted in anger would indeed have made him miserable.

The day of the trial at length arrived; and all the town was in a bustle. Basil was obliged to be in court, it being probable that he would be called upon as a witness; Bob, however, went right out of the town, for he could not stand the remarks which met his ears on all sides.

And how did Dick feel? Alas! still hardened, still impenitent. When he found that escape was hopeless, he was determined to brave all, with as much spirit as he could; and as he and his companions were again led along the streets, while a crowd of idle children hooted them, and many known faces were seen around them, he raised his eyes and faced the crowd with a look of indifferent contempt. He entered the court with the same careless air, and before long even ventured to survey all present; but his eyes, in spite of himself, quickly fell when he caught sight of poor Basil, who sat with his face covered, and his head leaning on his hands. Had their eyes met, Dick

would have been quite unnerved ; but Basil had not seen Dick's entrance, having never raised his eyes since he knew that he was coming.

And now, as witness after witness came forward, Basil felt sick at heart ; and it is probable that had he been called upon, he would have found it quite impossible to speak ; but happily this trial was spared him, as there was quite sufficient evidence without his, and just when he was trembling with apprehension that his turn was come, the kind hand of Mr Airdale was laid upon his shoulder, while he whispered gently, 'Basil, you may come out ; you are not wanted.'

He sprang from his seat, and grasping Mr Airdale's hand, followed him out of court. He looked pale, and trembled, while he thanked Mr Airdale for rescuing him. He looked so pale, that Mr. Airdale would not leave him, but kindly took him to his own house, and tried to comfort him.

Basil just left in time to escape hearing the sentence of transportation, which was very soon afterwards pronounced upon the whole gang. Upon some for a period of seven years, but upon Crossman and Dick, as the leaders of the gang, for fourteen. Once more, before they sailed, Basil visited Dick, but there was nothing cheering in the visit ; nothing to make us hope that Dick in the least repented of his sin, or was likely ever to amend. We must leave him in sorrow, and take warning from his example ; we see in him the danger of wilful sin, and how the devil will hold captive those who give themselves up to his guidance. Let us, then, beware of the first step in the path of the wicked, lest our end be like his.

Poor Bob we may leave with happier feelings ; for though he, like Dick, had fallen from his baptismal innocency, he had never so deliberately chosen the way of evil ; and when God spoke to him and called him to repentance, he shut not his ears against the still small voice, but listened humbly ; and by little

and little, step by step, was led back again, to that narrow way, which for a while he had forsaken.

And what must we say of Basil? Of him I think we need not feel doubtful, but may leave him in the hands of God, confident that He would bless and protect His faithful child as long as He saw fit to leave him in this world of trial; and in His own good time would take him to his home in glory, for the sake of Jesus Christ his Saviour.

We will only say, in conclusion, that as long as Bob and Basil lived, they never forgot each other, but continuing in the bonds of love, they helped each other through the trials, temptations, and troubles, of this world; and, we doubt not, that they who loved with a love so pure while they lived, after death would not be divided.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Ash-Wednesday.

COLLECT.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AFTER the evening service on Ash-Wednesday, the first classes came up to Mr Walton's house for a lesson. The girls were taught in one room by Mr Walton, and the boys in another by his sister. They never liked the children to miss a lesson on any day which was appointed by the Church to be kept holy, if it were possible to avoid it, and they had therefore on the previous Sunday appointed for the children to come, nearly all of whom were able to do so.

James and David went to the daily school, and had been taught in the morning, so they were not of the party. Edgar was also missing, but all the rest were there.

They said the Collect as on Sundays, and read the Epistle and Gospel.

'What do you call to-day?' asked Miss Walton.

Several. Ash-Wednesday.

Miss W. It is the first day of what season?

All. Lent.

Miss W. Do you know what Lent means? What time of year is this?

Andrew. Spring.

No. 18.

Miss W. Lent, in the Saxon language, means spring. What does the Church appoint Lent for?

Edward. Fasting and sorrow.

Miss W. Yes, and it is called the Lent or Spring fast. How long does it last?

All. Forty days.

Miss W. Can you tell me the reason why that is the period appointed?

Francis. Because our Saviour fasted forty days in the Wilderness.

Miss W. Do we read of any one else fasting for so long?

‘Yes, Moses in the Mount,’ replied George.

Miss W. Any body else?

Alfred. Elijah.

Miss W. The Church, then, appoints forty days as the period for our fast, in imitation of—?

‘Moses and Elijah,’ said several.

‘But principally,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘in imitation of—?’

‘Jesus Christ fasting in the wilderness,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, in order ‘that we may, as far as we are able, conform to Christ’s example, and suffer with Him here, that we may reign with Him hereafter.’* What ends Lent?

Andrew. Easter.

Miss W. When did all our Saviour’s sufferings end?

Charley. At His death.

Miss W. What followed shortly afterwards?

Edward. He rose from the dead at Easter.

Miss W. So the Church thinks fit that our spiritual afflictions and sorrows should end, as His did, before Easter. St. Augustin says, ‘The fast of Lent signifies this present troublesome life, and Easter signifies eternal happiness and rest.’† But are the Sundays during Lent kept as fast days?

* Vide Bp. Sparrow’s Rationale, on Ash-Wednesday. † Ibid.

Alfred. No, Sunday is always a feast.

Miss W. Now, if you took out of the six weeks of Lent, six Sundays, how many days would be left for fasting?

‘Only thirty-six,’ replied several.

Miss W. How many days, therefore, of this week are added on?

All. Four.

‘Which make up,’ said Miss Walton, ‘how many?’

‘Forty,’ again they quickly replied.

Miss W. This is the reason why Lent begins on a Wednesday, instead of the beginning of a week. What did you say this Wednesday was called?

Samuel. Ash-Wednesday.

Miss W. This day used to be called the head of Lent, and was a day for great humiliation. What have I told you used to be sprinkled upon the heads of the people?

‘Ashes,’ replied several.

Miss W. Yes, to remind them of their mortality, and that they deserved to be burned in everlasting fire. And what were penitents clothed in?

Several. Sackcloth.

Miss W. And these are the reasons why to-day is called—?

‘Ash-Wednesday,’ replied the boys.

Miss W. But to-day was not only used in the early Church for penitents to humble themselves, but what was done to notorious sinners?

‘Did not you once say, ma’am,’ asked Francis, ‘that they were punished before every body?’

Miss W. Yes, Francis, and I will now read you a short sketch of the manner in which it was ordered that a person was to be excommunicated, as it was called, from Bishop Sparrow’s account. ‘Let all notorious sinners who have been already, or are now enjoined public penance, this day present themselves before the Church-doors to the bishops of the place,

clothed in sackcloth, bare-footed, with eyes cast down upon the ground, professing thus, by their habit and countenance, their guilt. After this, let them (that is, some of the clergy) bring the penitents into the Church, and, with the clergy present, let the bishop sing the seven penitential psalms, prostrate upon the ground, with tears for their absolution. Then the bishop, arising from prayer, according to the Canons, let him lay his hands upon them (that is, to ratify their penance, not to absolve them); let him sprinkle ashes upon their heads, and cover them with sackcloth, and, with frequent sighs and sobs, let him denounce to them, that as Adam was cast out of Paradise, so are they cast out of the Church for their sins. After this, let the bishops command the officers to drive them out of the Church-doors, the clergy following them with this response, "In the sweat of thy brow shall thou eat bread;" that these poor sinners, seeing Holy Church afflicted thus, and disquieted for their sins, may be sensible of their penance.'

'How very dreadful it must have been,' said Alfred, 'to be punished so publicly.'

Miss W. Yes, but perhaps it helped people to realize the wickedness of sin, and the fear of such punishment might prevent some from doing wrong. Do you remember what was read this morning in Church about it?

'Yes; in the Communion service,' said Francis, who had been there, 'it said something about a "godly discipline."'

Miss W. Yes, and it says that it is 'much to be wished that such discipline might be restored.' But since it is not, boys, that is no reason why *we* should not all try and observe Ash-Wednesday and Lent as well as we can, with the help that the Church gives us. What have the services been mostly about to-day?

Francis. About repenting and being sorry for our sins.

Miss W. Yes, and in the Communion service we confessed our sins, and entreated God to spare us miserable sinners. Look at the last prayer but one.

Edward. ‘Spare us, therefore, good Lord, spare Thy people whom Thou hast redeemed; enter not into judgment with Thy servants, who are vile earth and miserable sinners; but so turn Thine anger from us, who meekly acknowledge our vileness, and truly repent us of our faults, and so make haste to help us in this world, that we may ever live with Thee in the world to come.’

‘And this penitent spirit, boys,’ said Miss Walton, seriously, ‘we must all strive after, especially during the season of Lent, upon which we are now entering. We must humble *ourselves*, since the Church no longer publicly shames the sinner, and we must seek with all humility and sorrow for pardon from God. The Collect for to-day will help us. Let us now consider it. How does it begin?’

Andrew. ‘Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made.’

Miss W. I think we shall find there is a reason why we begin in this way. You say Lent is a time for—what?

Samuel. Sorrow.

Miss W. What are we to be sorry for?

Charley. Our many sins.

Miss W. And you read last Sunday, that ‘God is of purer eyes than to behold—?’

‘Evil, and cannot look on iniquity,’ said Fred. (Habak. i. 13.)

Miss W. When, then, we think a great deal about our sins, and learn how many and grievous they are, and think of God’s purity, what might we begin to say? That God would not—?

‘Look upon us,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes; that our sins are so many and grievous, that God, who is pure and holy, must hate us, and turn from us. Therefore we begin by saying—?

All. ‘Almighty and everlasting God, who *hatest nothing* that Thou hast made.’

Miss W. Turn to Ezekiel, xxxiii. 11, and we shall there see, that even the sinner God does not hate.

Francis. ‘As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?’

Miss W. But, though God does not hate the sinner, He *does* hate *sin*, and, therefore, what would He that the sinner should do?

Several. Turn from his wickedness, and live.

Miss W. Why, then, do we begin the Collect by saying, that God hateth nothing that He hath made.

Edward. That we may not despair, and think that God will hate us because of our sins.

Miss W. How does the Collect go on?

All. And dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent.

Miss W. Not only, then, do we say that God does not hate us, but that He is willing to do—what?

Fred. To forgive us.

Miss W. How does St. Paul say God commended His love towards us?

George. ‘God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us.’ (Romans, v. 8.)

Miss W. What do we learn, then, that God does instead of hating us?

Several. Loves us.

Miss W. And How does He show His love?

Francis. By forgiving us?

Miss W. Will He forgive the sins of all.

Alfred. Of all that are penitent.

Miss W. Yes; but only of the penitent. There are texts almost innumerable declaring God's willingness to forgive. We will look, boys, for one or two. When God proclaimed Himself to Moses, it was as a God of mercy. Can any of you repeat the words?

George. 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousandss, *forgiving* iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.' (Exodus, xxxiv. 6, 7.)

Miss W. Now you shall give me a text from the prophets. Is there one in the sentences at the beginning of Morning Prayer?

Samuel. 'To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him.' (Daniel, ix. 9.)

Miss W. And is there any promise of pardon in the Gospels?

George. 'For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.' (St. Matthew, vi. 14.)

Miss W. And again, the sentences at the beginning of the Prayer-Book will give you a text from the Epistles.

Charley. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' (1 St. John, i. 9.)

Miss W. Very well, that will do. Seeing, then, that God will forgive the penitent, but only the penitent, what do we go on to ask Him to do?

All. 'Create and make in us new and contrite hearts.'

Miss W. Create them—what?

Edward. New.

Miss W. Or anew, we might say, and make them—?

'Contrite,' said Alfred.

Miss W. David prayed in nearly the same words in the fifty-first Psalm. Can you say the verse?

Fred. 'Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' (Verse 10.)

Miss W. Why do we need new hearts?

Edward. Because they are defiled by sin.

Miss W. Yes, and so much defiled, that they need something more than cleansing. What do they need to be made?

'New,' said Alfred.

Miss W. But we pray that God not only will make our hearts new, but what else?

Several. Contrite.

Miss W. What do you mean by contrite?

Edward. Sorrowful.

Miss W. We will look at this part of the petition first, because our hearts cannot be made new, unless they are contrite. Look at the 17th verse of the fifty-first Psalm.

Samuel. 'The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and a *contrite* heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise.'

Miss W. What sort of a spirit, then, is that right spirit, of which David speaks?

Edward. A contrite spirit.

Miss W. And look at Isaiah, lxvi. 2.

Henry. 'But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a *contrite spirit*, and trembleth at my word.'

Miss W. And from whom must this contrite spirit come?

Several. From God.

Miss W. Yes, and He has promised that He will give this spirit to His Church for His own sake. Ezekiel, xxxvi. 25-27.

Francis. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new

heart also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.'

Miss W. What is meant by a stony heart?

Edward. A hard, impenitent heart.

Miss W. This God promises to take away, and give a contrite heart, or heart of flesh. Therefore we pray to Him—?

All. 'Create and make in us new and contrite hearts.'

Miss W. Our hearts, then, being contrite, God will go on to make them new. Whilst they are hard and impenitent, what are they inclined to?

Edward. Evil.

Miss W. But when they are made new, then we shall walk in God's statutes, and keep His judgments, and do them. This is, then, the new heart we should seek for; a heart inclined—how?

'To what is good,' said Francis.

Miss W. If we have a truly contrite heart, how shall we lament our sins?

Edward. Worthily.

Miss W. And what shall we acknowledge?

All. Our wretchedness.

Miss W. That we may obtain—what, from God?

All. Perfect remission and forgiveness.

Miss W. What is meant by 'worthily lamenting our sins?'

'Does it not mean, being sorry in a right way,' asked Fred.

Miss W. Yes, Fred. St. Paul calls it a godly sorrow, because it comes from God. Look at 2 Corinthians; vii. 9, 10.

Charley. 'Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye

were made sorry after a godly manner,...For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.'

Miss W. We see, then, that there are two sorts of sorrow: true godly sorrow, and—?

'The sorrow of the world,' said Edward.

Miss W. We have two striking examples in the Bible of untrue, unreal repentance. Can any of you tell me either? Look at 1 Samuel, xv. 24.

George. 'And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words.'

Miss W. What had been Saul's sin?

Francis. He had disobeyed God's command to destroy the Amalekites.

'And he had offered up sacrifice himself, instead of waiting for Samuel,' said George.

Miss W. Look again at the 30th verse, and we shall find him still expressing sorrow.

Alfred. 'Then he said, I have sinned.'

Miss W. But was his repentance real?

Charley. No, for he was just as disobedient afterwards.

Miss W. Yes, and we see signs at this very time of his repentance being only in words. Why was he so anxious for Samuel to turn again? The end of the 30th verse will tell you.

Samuel. 'Honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God.'

Miss W. Did he wish, then, to worship God, that he might confess his sin?

Edward. No, but that he might be honoured before the people.

Miss W. And on whom had he first laid the blame?

George. On the people. 'The people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen.' (Verse 21.)

Miss W. Yes ; but at the beginning he had said, 'I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me.' (Verse 20.) What was it that after this brought him to confession ?

Edward. Samuel said that the kingdom was taken from him.

Miss W. What was he, then, really sorry for ? not his sin, but the— ?

Edward. Consequence.

Miss W. Yes, the threatened loss of his kingdom was what really grieved him, and made him say, I have sinned. Judas is another awful example. When he found that Jesus was condemned, what are we told about him ?

George. 'Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood...And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.' (St. Matthew, xxvii. 3-5.)

Miss W. He, too, 'found no place of repentance,' but 'fell, that he might go to his own place.' These are two awful examples of unreal repentance. And now they were unreal we shall find, if we now take an example of a true penitent ; of one who worthily lamented his sins. And we will also take this example from among the apostles. Which of them fell into sin ?

Several. St. Peter ; he denied his Lord.

Miss W. Let us now consider his repentance, that we may learn from it, boys, how we must each of us sorrow for our sins, that we may lament worthily. What first brought him to repentance ?

Alfred. The cock crowing.

Miss W. Yes, that was the outward means. All the apostles would probably remember the warning

they had received when they heard the cock crow; but was there no other means used?

George. Jesus 'turned and looked upon Peter.' (St. Luke, xxii. 61.)

Miss W. That is right. Would the look, do you think, be noticed by others?

'No,' they all answered.

Miss W. But what did it make St. Peter do?

Alfred. It made him remember what Jesus had said.

Miss W. Yes, though a call only to him, and seen by none others, it touched his heart, and led him to repentance. What other call is required besides an outward call?

Edward. An inward call.

Miss W. And this look of our Saviour's typified the inward call. It spoke to his heart, and was seen by none. So God generally brings us to repentance. This season of Lent, for instance, is it an inward or an outward call?

Several. An outward.

Miss W. All are called to repentance at this season; but God must also inwardly move our hearts, or the outward call will do us no good. You shall give me another example. When any of you do wrong, and Mr Walton knows it, what does he do?

Charley. He punishes us.

Miss W. Why does he punish you?

Alfred. To make us sorry.

Miss W. And what sort of a call to repentance is this?

Several. An outward call.

Miss W. Yes, boys; and it is God's appointed way to bring you to repentance. He has commanded that those who have the rule over you, should punish you for your faults, and *He* speaks to you by punishment, and bids you do—what?

'Repent,' said Francis.

Miss W. But punishment does not always make you sorry, I am afraid. Something more is required, besides the outward call: what is it?

‘That God should make us sorry,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes; the inward call is required also, and therefore you must pray to God to make your hearts contrite, and to call you by a look, as well as by punishment, even as He did to St. Peter; and take care that you do not let your pride make you turn away even from the outward call. I will tell you a story presently of the repentance of a king; but now we must go on considering St. Peter’s repentance. When the Lord turned and looked upon him, what did he do?

All. He ‘went out, and wept bitterly.’

Miss W. First, then, he sorrowed, and by his sorrow, what did he confess?

Edward. His sin.

Miss W. Secondly, did he remain where he had sinned?

Several. No; *he went out.*

Miss W. He left the scene of his temptation, and so showed the depth of his sorrow; for it must have been no little trial to him to leave his Lord at that moment. Why had he ever gone there?

George. To see the end.

Miss W. Yes; and it was love to his master that had carried him to the judgment hall, disregarding the danger to himself. Do you think, then, it was easy for him to leave, without seeing the end?

‘I suppose not,’ replied several.

Miss W. Now, thirdly; did St. Peter make any excuses for his fault?

Edward. No, ma’am, we are not told that he did.

Miss W. Yet, if he had wished to, he might have done. When did he first deny his Lord?

George. As he sat without.

Miss W. He might then, I do not mean that he

ought, but that it was possible he *might*, have accused himself by saying he told a lie in order to get admission. Then, after he was in, and was again accused of being one of them, could he draw back from his former word?

‘I suppose he ought,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, Charley, he ought; but he *might* have excused himself, by saying that he was obliged to keep to what he had said. Then, for the third time, he might have said it would have been dangerous then to retract, because he was in the midst of whom—?

‘All his enemies,’ said Francis.

Miss W. Yet, notwithstanding all that he *might* have said, did he excuse himself at all?

All. No.

Miss W. And, lastly, we shall find that he amended. Look at Acts, iv. 13.

Fred. ‘Now, when they saw the boldness of *Peter* and *John* . . . they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.’

Miss W. And, again, verses 18, 19, 20.

Henry. ‘And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, or teach in the name of Jesus. But *Peter* and *John* answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’

Miss W. Was St. Peter, then, any longer afraid of confessing his Lord?

‘No,’ they all replied.

Miss W. He had thrice denied Him before the Chief Priest. Before whom did he now confess him?

Several. Before the Chief Priests and Scribes.

Miss W. Throughout the whole of St. Peter’s life, after his repentance, we find him bold in acknowledging his Lord. How many times did he express his love to Jesus after His resurrection?

George. Three times.

Miss W. Three times he answered, 'Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee.' And how did he prove his love at last?

Edward. By dying for his Lord.

Miss W. What death did he die?

Alfred. He was crucified, with his head downwards.

Miss W. St. Peter, then, is an example to us of true repentance, because he sorrowed bitterly; he made no excuses; he left the scene of his temptation, and he amended; nor after forgiveness did he forget his fault, as appears in many ways. The gospel of St. Mark, for instance, which is said to have been written under his superintendence, speaks of all his faults; and but little of his goodness. Saul and Judas, on the contrary, sorrowed, yet without repentance; how was this? In the story I lately read to you of Basil, was not Dick sorry that he had stolen?

'He did not like the punishment,' replied Francis.

Miss W. Exactly; he was sorry for the consequence, not for the sin. And what did you say made Saul say, 'I have sinned?'

George. The fear of losing his kingdom.

Miss W. Yes; not because he had sinned against God. And what made Judas 'repent himself?'

Francis. Because Jesus was condemned.

Miss W. Again, he was sorry for the consequence of his act; if Jesus had been set at liberty, do you think he would have been sorry for his betrayal?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No; he was sorry for the consequence, not sorry for his sin of covetousness, which had led him to betray his master, nor for the more dreadful sin of having betrayed Him. Again, there may be amendment of some particular fault, without sorrow. Let us suppose that a boy steals little things, when he is but a boy, and when he grows up to be a man, leaves off, because he finds it would disgrace him. Would that be repentance?

‘Our wretchedness,’ continued several.

Miss W. Of whom must we seek for pardon?

All. Of God.

Miss W. Yes; we must pray, in the words
Collect, create—?

‘And make in us new and contrite hearts, that
worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging
wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God
mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through
Jesus Christ our Lord,’ repeated Andrew.

‘And now boys,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘I
explained to you what true repentance is, that
you may try, as well as others, to use this holy
sacrament rightly. You all have sins to be sorry for, and
God calls you now. Listen to His call: if you
respond to His outward call, He will help you inwardly
by giving you a contrite spirit. And I mentioned
punishment to you a while ago, because I want you to
remember that the sins you are punished for are
not only against man, but against whom?’

Several. Against God.

Miss W. And is it true sorrow if you are
sorry because you have been punished, not sorry

still to be sorry for them, it would help you to lament worthily, that you may obtain perfect remission and forgiveness.

As Miss Walton was saying this, Mr Walton entered the room, and heard her advice to the boys : sitting down by her, he said, ‘ Boys, I have come in to say a few words to you to-night, in addition to Miss Walton’s lesson. I have been giving some advice to the girls, which I should like to repeat to you.’ He stopped to see whether the boys were all listening, and finding they were very attentive, he proceeded : ‘ We cannot, boys, be rightly sorry for our sins without the help of God ; to use Lent aright, then, you must pray to Him to help you, and the Church gives you words in this Collect, which she has appointed to be said daily. Many of you will not be able to come to the daily service, though I hope you all will try to come as frequently as you can ; but you can say this collect alone, in your daily prayers ; and if you intend earnestly to try and use this holy season, I would advise you to add this Collect every day to your morning and evening prayers, and also to say each day one of the seven penitential Psalms. I will give you an arrangement of them. You must not, however, say the words without thought, but you must try and remember your faults, and bring them particularly before your minds. The faults you have been punished for, would, as Miss Walton said, be good for you to begin with ; and then also try to remember those which are known only to yourselves and God, and confess them again, even though you may have confessed them often before, and acknowledge your unworthiness to Him who can give perfect remission and forgiveness, but who will give it only to those who worthily lament their sin. You must not think that because you are boys, repentance is not necessary for you. Now is the best time for you to begin, while you are strong and healthy,

and before you have gone too far along the paths of sin. Will you try, boys, to follow my advice?

‘Yes, sir,’ answered Alfred, Edward, Francis, and one or two others. Mr Walton then gave them a paper, with a Psalm arranged for each day. It was as follows. Sunday, Ps. xxxii. Monday, Ps. cii. Tuesday, Ps. vi. Wednesday, Ps. xxxviii. Thursday, Ps. cxliii. Friday, Ps. li. Saturday, Ps. cxxx.

When Mr Walton had done this, and had sat down again, Fred ventured to say, ‘Please, ma’am, you have not told us the story you said you would.’

‘No, Fred,’ replied Miss Walton; ‘and, late as it is, I suppose I must, since I said that I would. It will not take long:—

‘Many years ago there was a christian Emperor of Rome named Theodosius, most of his predecessors having been heathens. He maintained with great zeal the Catholic cause against some heretics called Arians, and was a friend of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. But when he had been emperor some time, he fell into grievous sin by giving way to anger.

‘In the year 390, a man of the name of Buthericus, a military magistrate, imprisoned one of his slaves, a charioteer in a circus, for a great offence. This charioteer was a favourite with the people. I suppose he performed many wonderful feats, as men do in the circus now, and on the next day of the games the people demanded his liberation. Buthericus refused, saying that his fault was too great to allow of his being so soon set at liberty. The people, angry at the imprisonment of their favourite, rose in insurrection, murdered Buthericus and his principal officers, and dragged their bodies about the streets.

‘The Emperor Theodosius, when he heard this, was justly angry, and ordered summary punishment, much too severe. St. Ambrose and some other bishops hearing of it, went immediately and begged the

emperor to be merciful in his punishment. He listened to them, and promised that he would be so ; but no sooner had St. Ambrose left him, than Rufinus, his minister, persuaded him to break his promise, and again the order was given for punishment. Instead, however, of its being done openly, the people of Thessalonica were invited in the Emperor's name to the circus, as if for entertainment, and crowds hastened to the sight. A party of soldiers had in the meantime been arranged within the circus, and on a signal being given, they rushed in among the people, and seven thousand were slain.

‘How very dreadful,’ said Fred. ‘And did the emperor know? did he order it?’

‘Yes,’ said Miss Walton ; ‘he broke his promise, and thus cruelly punished the people, and many innocent persons, as well as the guilty, most likely fell. He repented of this horrible order not long after it was given, and tried to recall it ; but the reprieve came too late ; the deed was done, and seven thousand had fallen. And now you have heard of his sin, you shall hear of his repentance.’

‘When the news arrived at Milan, Theodosius was not there, but he was expected in a few days. St. Ambrose immediately withdrew from the city to escape an interview ; at the same time he wrote a letter to the emperor, telling him of his fault. After a time, however, he returned, and the emperor soon afterwards presented himself at the Cathedral, according to custom ; but St. Ambrose met him boldly on the steps, and said, “Stay ! in the profaneness of sin, with hands polluted with innocent blood, none may enter this holy place, or partake of the sacred mysteries.” In vain did the monarch try to excuse himself by the example of David, who had sinned, and was restored to the favour of Almighty God. “You have imitated him in his sin,” St. Ambrose sternly replied ; “imitate him in his repentance.” The

emperor felt the justice of what St. Ambrose said, and yielding to the voice of the Church, he returned in tears to the palace. For eight months he was suspended, that is, not allowed to join in the services of the Church, or receive the Holy Communion; which is what is meant, boys, by excommunicating a person; and during that time he was in great agony of mind.

‘Christmas however came, bringing joy to the penitent emperor, for he was then, after doing public penance, restored to communion with the Church. As he approached the cathedral, he laid aside his imperial robes, I mean the gorgeous robes which he wore as emperor, and casting himself on the ground, weeping with unfeigned sorrow, he struck his breast, and said, in the words of David, “My soul cleaveth to the dust: quicken Thou me according to Thy word.” All the people were melted into tears, and lifted up their voices in prayer with their emperor and bishops. St. Ambrose was, perhaps, the most affected of all; for indeed it must have been hard for him to have been obliged to seem cold and harsh towards an emperor who had been kind to him, and was his earthly master.

‘The emperor having thus publicly suffered, and shown his repentance, and having promised to make a law that no one should be put to death until thirty days after an order was given, he received absolution, and was once more admitted to the Holy Communion.’

‘How very glad he must have been!’ said Alfred. ‘Fancy not going to Church for eight months!’

‘I have no doubt he was very glad,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘But it is too late to talk about it now. I told you the story that you might have an example of a penitent, and see how the Church in early days exercised her authority.’

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The First Sunday in Lent.

COLLECT.

O Lord, who for our sakes didst fast forty days and forty nights; Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to Thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

Miss Walton. To whom is to-day's Collect addressed, boys?

Several. To God the Son.

Miss W. What do we say He did for our sakes?

All. Fasted 'forty days and forty nights?'

Miss W. Where did He fast?

Several. In the wilderness.

Miss W. How was He led into the wilderness?

George. He was led of the Spirit.

Miss W. And we say in the Collect He fasted—for what?

David. 'For our sakes.'

Miss W. This is, then, the first thing we have to understand. Why it is said He fasted *for our sakes*. Let us, then, see what fasting is for. What do we pray in the Collect we may subdue?

Alfred. The 'flesh.'

Miss W. What does subdue mean?

Edward. Conquer.

Miss W. Or bring into subjection. And what is the flesh to be brought into subjection to?

Francis. 'The Spirit.'

Miss W. What is eating and drinking necessary to?

Edward. The flesh.

Miss W. Then, by fasting, what is subdued or overcome?

Alfred. The flesh.

Miss W. Yes, because its wants are denied. What does St. Paul tell us the flesh lusts against?

Samuel. 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other.' (Gal. v. 17.)

Miss W. Very well; in us, then, the flesh and spirit are 'contrary the one to the other.' But was it so in our blessed Saviour's person?

'No,' said Francis, 'for He was quite good.'

'He took our nature,' said Miss Walton; 'but without what?'

Several. Without sin.

Miss W. Then, being without sin, what was He able to overcome?

Edward. The flesh.

Miss W. The very act of going into the wilderness subjected the flesh to the Spirit, for He was led of—what?

George. The Spirit.

Miss W. And what sort of a place is a wilderness?

Francis. A wild, solitary place.

Miss W. Where would the flesh, then, rather have led to?

Edward. Into the busy world.

Miss W. But our Saviour, in going into the wilderness, subdued the flesh, and followed—?

Samuel. The Spirit.

Miss W. After He was in the wilderness, what else did He do to subdue the flesh?

Charley. He fasted.

Is W. And this He did, not because His own was contrary to the Spirit, but because He had—what nature?

Is W. Man's nature.

Is W. Yes; whose flesh is contrary to—what?

Is W. The Spirit.

Is W. Because, then, He had taken that nature, what must He subdue?

Is W. The flesh.

Is W. He subdued the flesh *for* us, in our nature, and we subdue it *in* Him, being made one with Him. (Look at Heb. ii., 10, 11.)

Is W. 'For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both *He* sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of

Is W. He was made perfect, then, as what?

Is W. As man.

Is W. And He subdued the flesh as—?

Is W. As man,' they again replied.

Is W. And so man, being in Him, may 'go on likewise.' (Look again at verse 18.)

Is W. 'For in that He Himself hath suffered, tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.'

Is W. And also chapter v. 8, 9.

Is W. 'Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and made perfect, He became the *Author* of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him.'

Is W. This, boys, is a great mystery; how He, so pure and perfect in Himself, subdued the flesh in nature, that we, being in Him, might be perfect. For this reason, we say He fasted—?

Is W. 'For our sakes,' said Charley.

Miss W. He is also our example ; therefore, we call to mind His fasting, what do we go pray ?

Andrew. ‘Give us grace to use such abstinence that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we ever obey Thy Godly motions in righteousness true holiness.’

Miss W. What does to abstain mean ?

Edward. To keep from.

Miss W. Abstinence, then, means a keeping from, but do we speak of abstaining altogether ? We give us grace to use—?

Fred. ‘Such abstinence.’

Miss W. There are different degrees of abstinence. How did our Saviour abstain from food ?

‘He abstained altogether,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. And for how long ?

Edgar. ‘Forty days and forty nights.’

Miss W. Moses and Elijah did the same ; but it by their own strength ?

Edward. No ; God enabled them to do so.

Miss W. No mere man could possibly, in his own strength, live so long without food. But, supposing we abstain sometimes, or from some particular thing, that would still be—what ?

Francis. Abstinence.

Miss W. Yes, in its degree. But why is abstinence to be used at all ?

Charley. That our flesh may be ‘subdued to the Spirit.’

Miss W. And that being subdued, we may—

‘Ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness,’ continued David.

Miss W. Very well ; the degree of abstinence we should use is *such* as will best help us to subdue our flesh to the Spirit. For what did you say the season of Lent was appointed ?

Alfred. As a time for sorrow.

'ss W. And what was to go along with sorrow?
ward. Amendment.

'ss W. To-day's Collect, then, teaches us one
s of amendment. What is it?

ancis. Abstinence.

'ss W. The Church teaches us the same thing,
at she appoints Lent as a season for fasting; and
we all need to subdue the flesh, what means
ve best use?

'he means the Church appoints,' said George.

'ss W. But can we, like our blessed Saviour, fast
ely for so long a time?

veral. No, that would kill us.

'ss W. Yet His example we must all follow in
measure. We ought all, you as well as others,
e some abstinence, in order to subdue our flesh.
I tell you a short story which will show you how
can all, if you will, find out ways of denying
flesh, and so subduing it.

'hat is right,' whispered several of the boys.
do *just about* like to hear stories.'

'ne Ash-Wednesday, many years ago,' said Miss
on, 'a little boy, whom we will call Arthur,
een catechized in his class (as any of you might
pon the duties of Lent. The clergyman had
them all that they should try and deny them-
s. "I do not tell you, little boys," he said, "to
ithout food, or even to take less than you re-
, but I do tell you not always to take what you
best, and so to deny yourselves. Or you can
yourselves in your play, by either not playing
ich, or by choosing, to please your playfellows,
s you do not care about. And you may deny
elves in talking, by staying alone when you
d rather be with companions, and so being silent
ad of talking. If you deny yourselves in any
ese ways, because you wish to follow the
ple of your blessed Saviour, who fasted so long

for your sakes, and if you deny yourselves in these things in order that you may more easily turn away from sinful pleasures when they tempt you, you will be making a good use of Lent, and be better fitted to follow the motions of the Holy Spirit."

'Little Arthur listened with great attention to all the clergyman said, and when the lesson was over, he could not put it out of his mind, but was trying to think what he could do to deny his flesh. He very often did not get enough to eat, even when he had finished all that was given to him; and when school was over, it was seldom he stayed to play much, for his mother always had something for him to do at home, either to hold the baby, or draw water; so that even in play he had not so many opportunities of denying himself as some boys have. All he could settle upon, then, was, that he would watch for opportunities; and he thought, perhaps, if he did what his mother required cheerfully, when he would rather be at play, it would be something like self-denial. Do you think he was wrong in this thought, Charley?' asked Miss Walton.

Charley looked up into her face, and answered, with a meaning smile, 'No, ma'am, I am sure he was not.'

'It was not long,' continued Miss Walton, 'before Arthur found the opportunity he was on the watch for. As he went home from school that day, one of his neighbours called to him as he went past her house, and asked him if he would go and get a little yeast for her. "If mother can spare me," he answered. "Well," said the woman, who well knew that Arthur was to be trusted, "here's a penny for you and a mug; I only want a halfpenny's worth, and you may keep the other for yourself." Arthur tripped joyfully along, and on reaching home asked his mother's leave to go on the errand, and told her what the woman had said about the halfpenny, finish-

ing by saying, "Will you have the halfpenny, mother?"

"No, my boy," she answered, "you may keep it yourself, and buy what you like, and go at once for Mrs Ring, and then you'll be back by the time dinner is ready."

Arthur immediately set off, feeling quite rich, and wondering what he was to do with his halfpenny. After he had procured the yeast, he came to a shop where there were some tops, and whistles, and various toys in the window, and next to this shop there were sweetmeats to be sold. He stood doubting which to go into; he knew he could get a whistle for a halfpenny, if he could not get a top, or he might have some sweetmeats. Whilst he stood considering, the words of the clergyman came into his mind, and he thought, now I can deny myself; but then what can I do with the halfpenny? Little Arthur was not long in deciding, for he was honest in his wish to use some abstinence. He left the shops, and running on, came to a flower-stall, where he thought he should find some violets. He was not mistaken, and after a little bargaining, got a bunch for a halfpenny.

"What could he be going to do with them?" asked James.

"That's not what puzzles *me*," said Alfred; "but why did he buy them instead of going and gathering them himself?"

"I can explain that," answered Miss Walton. "He lived in London, where little boys cannot go and gather flowers whenever they like. Many poor children have never seen a flower, except it be in a shop, or carried about by people to sell."

"I should not like to live in London, then," said several of the boys.

"No, I don't think you would," replied Miss Wal-

ton, 'country boys seldom like the town ; but now listen to the end of my story.'

'When Arthur was possessed of his valuable little bunch of violets, he ran joyfully on, and leaving the yeast with Mrs Ring, turned down a narrow, dirty alley, and entered a very miserable-looking house. In one corner of the room was a bed, on which lay a pale, sickly little girl, of about Arthur's own age. She smiled as Arthur entered, and softly approaching her, said, "See, Emmy, dear, I have got some violets for you," and held the little bunch to the sick child.

"How very good—how very kind ! Where did you get them ?" she asked, in a weak, gentle voice. "They are so beautiful ; thank you, Arthur, dear."

'Arthur felt very happy to see the pleasure he had given to his sick friend, but he would not stay to be thanked.

"I am glad you like them, Emmy, dear," he answered ; "but I can't stay talking now, or I shan't get dinner finished in time for school. Good-bye," and before she had time to reply, he was gone.

'This was not the only opportunity that little Arthur found for denying himself during that Lent, because he continued to watch for chances ; and trifling, boys, as each thing was in itself, not one done in a right spirit would be rejected by God, for He turned not away from the poor widow's two mites, neither will He turn away from the services of a simple child.'

'But what else did Arthur do,' asked several of the boys.

'I can't tell you more now,' said Miss Walton, 'I have told you enough to show you that you, as well as Arthur, if you try, can find out ways of denying yourselves, and bringing the flesh into subjection to the spirit, during the season of Lent.

'But now we must go on with the Collect. First

ell me what is to be the end of all abstinence or self-denial?

‘To subdue the flesh, that we may follow the spirit,’ replied Edward.

Miss W. Very well; and we should deny ourselves a little things, in order that we may more easily turn away from—what?

Francis. Greater things.

Miss W. Can we both indulge the flesh and follow the spirit?

George. No; because ‘they are contrary the one to the other.’

Miss W. Look at what St. Paul says in Rom. viii. 13.

Samuel. ‘For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.’

Miss W. Look again—1 Peter, ii. 11.

Edgar. ‘Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.’

Miss W. Have we made any promise to strive against the lusts of the flesh?

Fred. Yes; at our baptism we promised to renounce ‘all the sinful lusts of the flesh.’

Miss W. And in the collect to-day we pray to God to give us grace to do so. To what person do we address this prayer?

All. To God the Son.

Miss W. And why do we pray to Him especially?

Edward. Because, having been Himself ‘tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.’ (See Heb. ii. 18.)

Miss W. Yes; He overcame the flesh by His own Divine power; but we cannot do this, and must seek grace of Him who has conquered for us. Can you tell me any of the works of the flesh which we must learn to subdue?

George. 'Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.' (Gal. v. 19-21.)

Miss W. And those who do such things, St. Paul says, cannot enter—?

'The kingdom of heaven,' said David.

Miss W. And while we endeavour to subdue the flesh, what must we follow?

Francis. The motions of the Holy Spirit.

Miss W. What do you mean by motions?

Edward. Movements.

Miss W. That is right; the Holy Spirit moves us; how does He move us?

Charley. By putting good thoughts into our hearts.

Miss W. And when good thoughts are put into your hearts, what, do you say, speaks to you?

Francis. Our consciences.

Miss W. Then how does the Holy Spirit move us?

Several. By our consciences.

Miss W. And what sort of motions are the motions of the Spirit?

All. Godly motions.

Miss W. Who sends the Holy Spirit to speak to us?

All. God.

Miss W. At one time our Saviour says, 'I will send Him;' and another time He says, 'The Father' sends Him. How is this? (See St. John, xiv. 26. xvi. 7.)

'The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are all One,' replied Edward.

Miss W. That is right, Edward; and therefore the motions of the Holy Spirit are the motions of the Father, and—?

‘Of the Son,’ said several.

Miss W. In the Collect we speak of the Godly motions coming from which Person?

Alfred. God the Son.

Miss W. But He moves us through—?

‘The Spirit,’ said Francis.

Miss W. If, then, the Holy Spirit speaks to you, boys, by your conscience, and you refuse to obey it, you are resisting—whom?

Charley. The Spirit.

Miss W. Yes; instead of obeying His Godly motions, you are turning from them. This thought, boys, ought to make you very careful how you resist your conscience: it will lead you to obey in righteousness and true holiness, if you listen to its voice; but, if you turn from it, you will be following the flesh, or the devil, and be led into endless misery. Let us now find an example or two of the motions of the Spirit and the flesh, being contrary the one to the other. You have told me the works of the flesh; now tell me some of the fruits of the Spirit?

Edward. ‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.’

Miss W. The Spirit would teach you temperance; but what would the flesh lead you to?

Francis. Intemperance.

Miss W. What do you mean by intemperance?

Several. Eating and drinking too much.

Miss W. That is *one* sort of intemperance, certainly; but that is not what intemperance means. *When* are you intemperate in eating and drinking?

Several. When we take too much.

Miss W. Then the taking too much is what makes you—?

‘Intemperate,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Intemperance, then, means—?

Francis. Taking too much of anything.

Miss W. Yes, a man may be intemperate in work, or amusement, or anger, or in talking, indeed, in almost anything. It is not, however, about intemperance in eating or drinking, that I now want to speak to you. I have often before done that. But what are you all so fond of doing when your work is over?

‘Playing,’ cried several.

‘But playing is not wrong,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. No, certainly it is not, Alfred; but intemperate play is. Can any of you tell me how you can be intemperate in your play?

‘By playing too much, I suppose,’ said Edward.

Miss W. That is certainly one way, but not what you, boys, who are kept to work, are in most danger of. Can you tell me any other way?

The boys did not answer, and Miss Walton waited to see if they could think of any way; at length Alfred whispered, ‘By playing at wrong times.’

Miss W. Yes, Alfred, that is the way. You are all of you intemperate in your play when you play at wrong times. Tell me some of the times when it is wrong to play?

‘In Church,’ answered several.

Miss W. Yes; there most of all; and yet, boys, how often are you tempted to do it. Now, when you play in Church, do you not know that it is wrong?

All. Yes, ma’am.

Miss W. At the very moment that you are playing—perhaps twisting your books; or, as I saw one of you doing lately, making your handkerchief into a rabbit—does not something whisper to you that you are doing wrong?

Again they answered, ‘Yes, ma’am.’

Miss W. And what is it that speaks to you?

‘Our consciences,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Or, you might say, the Holy Spirit. Fle

then; speaks one thing, and your own inclinations speak another; they are contrary the one to the other. Which should you follow?

Edward. The motions of the Spirit.

Miss W. But there are other times, boys, when play becomes intemperate. Sometimes, when you are coming to school, you are full of fun, laughing, and talking. That is not wrong; but after you get into school, when you begin your lessons, ought you to let your fun then get the better of you?

‘No, ma’am, we ought to stop then,’ said Alfred; and while he spoke he blushed, for it was but a minute before that he had been balancing his book, and let it fall.

Miss Walton continued: ‘At your work, too, is it right to play?’

‘No, ma’am,’ answered several.

Miss W. Then if you play in Church, or at school, during your lessons, or at work, or any time when you ought to be serious, what does your play become?

‘Intemperate,’ said Francis.

Miss W. Play may also be intemperate, when you become so wild and thoughtless that you hardly know what you say or do, and if any one speaks to you, perhaps you pay no attention. How was it when Miss Tule came into the school on Friday afternoon with some of you? ‘You may well look ashamed, little boys,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘for you know you were so noisy that it was some time before she could make you attend at all. But is any sort of intemperance right, boys?’

‘No, ma’am,’ they all answered.

‘It is not because I don’t like to see you play, boys, is it, that I have mentioned this?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘No, ma’am, that I am sure it isn’t,’ said several, ‘for you *always* like to see us play.’

‘Not quite always,’ replied Miss Walton, smiling; ‘at proper times I very much like to see you enjoy yourselves, but I do not like to see you intemperate in your play, because that is wrong, and will lead to greater evils. And now, during Lent, can you do nothing to cure yourselves of intemperance in play?’

‘Do you mean by not always playing when we might?’ asked Charley.

Miss W. Yes, Charley. It might, and would, I think, be a very good way for some of you, to subdue the flesh: if you would deny yourselves in a little lawful play, it would be a help to you against intemperance in play at any time. And as I said about little Arthur, if you do even this trifling thing in a right spirit, do it as a service to God, He will bless you and strengthen you always to obey His Godly motions. But whatever you do, remember to do it to God. How do we finish the Collect?

Andrew. ‘To Thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.’

Miss W. This is the end for which we should follow after holiness. The glory and honour of God who made us, redeemed us, and strengthens us. And remember, boys, no self-denial, or abstinence, will do you any good, unless it is done in humility, and as a means to enable you to do—what?

Several. Obey the motions of the Holy Spirit.

Miss W. And this you must endeavour to do in ‘righteousness and true holiness, to the honour and glory of God.’ That any thing we can do, *should* be to His Glory, is a great mystery; but He allows us to think that it may be so, and this should make us try more earnestly to live in true holiness. After speaking of God the Son fasting for our sakes, as man, the Church leads us at the end of the Collect to think of Him as—what?

Edward. One 'with the Father, and the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Yes; we turn from contemplating Him subduing the flesh—how?

Alfred. By fasting in the wilderness.

Miss W. Yes; suffering and fighting against spiritual enemies as man. We turn from this view of Him, to contemplate Him—where?

Edward. Living and reigning 'with the Father and the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Now, He who fasted for our sakes, is in glory; but will He forget us, who have still to fight, and watch, and pray?

Charley. No, ma'am. He looks down upon us, and hears us when we pray to Him.

Miss W. This is what I want you to remember—that in your most trifling endeavours to follow Him, by denying yourselves, or by listening to, and obeying the motions of the Holy Spirit, He looks down upon you in love; and having been Himself tempted, will succour you when you are tempted; only do all to His honour and glory, and pray to Him for grace to follow His blessed example.

Miss Walton rose when she had said this, and stopped the lessons of the other classes. They were soon all arranged in order to walk down to Church. The little children went first, then the girls, and the boys behind. The first class, who walked last of all, were apt to forget themselves, and walk irregularly, and to play more than Miss Walton liked, while she was attending to the younger children. She had not mentioned this particular example to them of intemperate play, but it seemed to-day as if their own consciences told them that it was an instance, for there was no nonsense going on amongst them. Miss Walton kept an eye upon them, expecting to have to speak to one or other as she usually had, but to-day they were all quiet. ■

Even Charley walked steadily; and Edward, who generally seemed to think himself too big a boy to keep in the ranks, took his place, and stood quietly till the procession started.

It is well when boys act upon the lesson they have just been taught, the very first opportunity they have, let it be ever so trifling a one. Unless they do, it is most probable they will not act at all.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Second Sunday in Lent.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INDEED, I fear it must be so,' said Miss Walton, in tone of sadness, replying to some remark her brother had just made to her. 'It is very grievous,' she continued; 'but for the sake of the other boys, I suppose it must be.'

'Yes,' replied Mr Walton; 'we have now given him a long trial. He has had the same advantages as the other boys, he has been taught his duties, been punished for his faults, and encouraged when he seemed to be trying to do better; I think we have done every thing we could for him, and yet all seems in vain.'

'It does, indeed, appear so,' again said Miss Walton; 'and now, painful as it is to me to lose any of my boys, I see he must be expelled. Perhaps that may rouse him to serious thought, which nothing else has done.'

My readers, I dare say, have guessed of whom Mr Walton and Miss Walton were speaking.

It is a sad story I have now to tell of Henry North. We cannot, however, but be prepared for evil tidings of him, for we have seen him committing fault after fault without repentance. We have seen that neither punishment nor kindness would bring him to confession, and we remember that Mr Walton had said, that for the next offence he must be expelled from the school. And now the time had come.

For many years Henry had been at the Forley school. Instruction had been given to him, and every thing done to induce him to amend his ways, but he would not.

Although the oldest boy in the school, he was continually doing wrong himself, and leading, or trying to lead, others to do the same. He broke the rules of the school, was inattentive over his lessons, he seldom or never answered questions, and always repeated the Collect more or less imperfectly. His word was not in the least to be depended upon; nor his obedience when out of sight. Altogether, he was gaining no good himself, while he was doing harm to others.

It was this which now decided Mr Walton, though with reluctance, to expel him from the school. And when my readers hear how wilfully he had again chosen the evil and refused the good, they will, I hope, take warning from him, and not turn a deaf ear to the words of counsel and instruction given to them by their clergyman or teacher.

A party of boys were coming slowly along the road on their way to the afternoon school, on the first Sunday in Lent. It was one of those early spring days, which sometimes show themselves even in February. The sun was shining, and the birds were singing, while it seemed as if winter were really gone, and the soft spring had taken its place. There was something in the day which made the boys walk

slowly, stopping now and then to look at the hedges, as if they expected to see them showing signs of life; or peering among the grass in the sunny nooks, almost with the hope of finding the first primrose of the year.

‘How I wish we could take a walk instead of going to school,’ cried Alfred. ‘I think Miss Walton would take us a walk if only she knew how pleasant it was,’ he continued. ‘Will you ask her, Francis?’

‘I don’t like to,’ he replied. ‘I think she isn’t well, she looked so pale this morning.’

‘Then a walk would do her good,’ suggested Fred, ‘it would tire her less than teaching.’

‘Well,’ said Henry, ‘I say it’s a shame of her to expect us to go to school such a day as this. Let us all stay away together; Mr Walton can’t punish us then, and we will take a long walk.’

‘Indeed, *I* shan’t go a walk,’ returned Alfred, ‘unless Miss Walton gives us leave.’

‘Nor I! nor I!’ said Andrew and Fred.

‘The more fools you,’ replied Henry, vexed. ‘I won’t ask leave, whatever you choose to do, it looks so soft. Sam, won’t you come a walk without asking Miss Walton’s leave?’

‘I should like to,’ he replied; ‘but you know she would *vex* if we stayed from school without leave.’

‘I know she has no *need to vex* about it,’ returned Henry; ‘I think we are old enough to do as we like about going to school.’

This argument continued until they reached the corner of the street, where stood Jim Elford and Ned Mason, whom my readers have heard of once before. Henry instantly proposed to them to accompany him in a long walk, saying, at the same time, that he had been trying to persuade the rest of the boys to go, but that they were afraid of Miss Walton, and durst not. Again an argument followed, and this time, I am sorry to say, Sam, and, alas! Francis also, were prevailed upon to go, as well as one or

two of the second-class boys. Fred, Andrew, Charley, and Alfred, however, continued firm in their refusal. The parties, therefore, separated : one setting off walking at a brisk pace, to avoid meeting any of the teachers, while the others continued to wend their way slowly towards the school.

‘I wish Francis would not go with those boys,’ said Alfred. ‘I know he will *vex* about it afterwards; but I could not persuade him to come along with us.’

Alfred was right. Francis’s irresolution often made him yield to others, and act in a way his conscience told him was wrong, and half an hour afterwards he would, as Alfred said, ‘vex,’ or be sorry, about it. In this instance he had proceeded but a very little way when he felt so unhappy that he wished most heartily that he had gone to school as usual; yet he had not courage enough to leave the party. This feeling made him pettish and cross, until, at length, his companions said they would rather be without him; he had better go back, if every thing displeased him so much. Glad of any excuse to return, he instantly replied, ‘Then I will,’ and began to retrace his steps.

The other party had in the meantime reached the school, and Miss Walton inquired where the missing boys were: but no one answered her. She saw at once that there was something wrong, which the boys did not like to tell. She would not force them to speak, respecting too much the feeling that made them silent, she therefore refrained from asking any more questions.

‘Well, boys,’ she said, ‘I see there is something amiss which you do not like to tell. I shall hear the truth some other way. I will not force you to bear witness against your school-fellows. But now,’ she continued, ‘the afternoon is so lovely, I am going to propose a walk instead of lessons. What do you say?’

‘Oh, yes, yes!’ they cried out; ‘it is just what we were wishing for.’

‘And now you shall have your wish,’ she answered, smiling; ‘Mr Walton has gone to see Farmer Brook, and he asked me to meet him as he returned. The maidens are waiting on the Ilsham road, so we will start directly.’

We must, however, leave this happy party, and follow Henry and his companions. After Francis left them, they slackened their pace, being now a mile from the village, and Henry thinking there was no more danger of detection. They seemed very merry, and laughed and talked as they went along. At length Jim proposed that they should go on to Ilsham, a town about four miles from Forley. ‘I have a cousin there,’ he said, ‘and he will give us some tea.’ Henry agreed, but Samuel and one or two others objected, saying they should not be back in time for Church.

‘Never mind that,’ said Ned; ‘can’t you stay away from service as well as from school?’

‘No,’ said Sam, ‘I shan’t do that. Father would give it me if he knew I had not gone to school, and he’ll find me out if I don’t go to Church either, so I shall say good-bye to you all.’

No one opposing him further, he and the second-class boys turned homeward. They had hardly done so, when Mr Walton, coming out of Farmer Brook’s gate, just lit upon Henry and his two companions.

‘Where are you going to, Henry, at school-time?’ he asked.

‘I am going to Ilsham,’ he replied, quickly. ‘Grandfather sent me.’

There was something in Henry’s manner which made Mr Walton at once suspect that he was not telling the truth. ‘Take care what you say, Henry,’ was Mr Walton’s reply. ‘Is that account true?’

‘Yes, Sir, it is,’ he again replied.

‘Then you have asked leave to be away from school?’ said Mr Walton.

‘I told Andrew to ask for me,’ he answered.

‘If you have told me the truth, it is all right,’ returned Mr Walton; ‘I hope you have, Henry;’ then he pursued his way, while Henry and his companions continued their walk.

‘How vexing just to meet Mr Walton then,’ was Henry’s first exclamation, when he was fairly out of hearing. ‘I’ll be bound he’ll find all out.’

‘Nay, he’ll never think about it again, I dare say,’ replied the other two, ‘and if he does, why you must brave it, that’s all.’

When they arrived at Ilsham, Jim’s cousin welcomed them very heartily, and they were soon all seated round a comfortable fire, enjoying their tea.

Time went by, and still they sat; the Ilsham church bells called them to prayer, but they heeded them not, continuing to amuse themselves with idle talk. After a while they were joined by some neighbours; then beer was sent for to enliven them, and at length a pack of cards was produced, and they all sat down to play. Now Henry’s father had frequently forbidden him to indulge in so dangerous an amusement, and he knew well it was no seemly employment for Sunday; he was not, however, in any mind to be restrained just then, and he therefore took his seat, and was soon engrossed in the game. Hour after hour flew by, while he regarded it not, but with a flushed face and excited manner continued to play.

At length the clock struck one, and starting from his seat, Ned cried out that he must go. Even then Henry was unwilling to move, but finding the other two were determined, he yielded, and they started on their return home. The excitement being now over, and the night air having somewhat cooled Henry’s heated brow, he began to think of the con-

sequence of his actions with no very pleasant feelings. He was afraid to go home that night, and on leaving his companions, when they had reached Forley, he sought an empty shed, which was near his home, and there spent the remainder of the night.

Surely no one will now wonder at the decision to which Mr and Miss Walton had come with respect to Henry.

We have nothing to do with what passed between him and his father, except to say that Henry tried by one falsehood after another to excuse himself. We will pass rather to the following Sunday, for though the scene of his expulsion was painful, it may be a useful warning to some of my readers.

The school was very full that morning, and there was a buzzing sound of many voices as Mr and Miss Walton approached the door; their entrance, however, was a signal for silence, and when they had reached the upper end of the room, all was perfectly still. Both Mr Walton and his sister looked very grave, and did not speak in their usual cheerful manner to the children. They looked round the room as if to see who were present, and many a wistful glance passed between both boys and girls, as they noticed Mr Walton's sad but severe countenance. The consciences of some of the boys perhaps told them what was the matter; but he who was most guilty looked quite unmoved.

At length the door being locked, and all the children seated in silence, Mr Walton said, in a low, grave voice, 'Henry North, stand up.'

At first he seemed inclined to disobey, but when he saw Mr Walton's stern countenance, he rose. All eyes were instantly upon him, and though he tried to look hardened, he turned pale, and trembled.

Mr Walton again spoke: 'Henry,' he said, 'you are the oldest boy in the school. You know the rules of my school; you have long been taught your

duties here, and yet you have broken my rules, and been guilty of most sinful and disgraceful conduct. Do you remember that I said a few weeks ago, that I would punish you no more, that for your next offence I must expel you from the school? Can you give me any reason why I should not do so now?

Henry answered, 'Others went walking as well as I.'

'It is no concern of yours what others did,' replied Mr Walton, sternly, 'you have but to answer for yourself. You know that it was my rule that you should ask leave before staying away from school; you disobeyed that rule, and tempted others to do the same, and then told a lie about it.'

Henry was here going to speak, but Mr Walton would not allow him until he had finished what he had to say. 'Your fault,' he continued, 'has been greater than merely breaking my rules. I met you, and asked you where you were going, and you told me another deliberate, wilful lie, saying, your grandfather had sent you; and when I warned you to take care what you were saying, you persisted in falsehood; you then pursued your walk in company with those I have often warned you against; you neglected the worship of God, and spent your whole evening in drinking and playing at cards, knowing that you were disobeying your father's repeated command. In this way you spent your whole Sunday evening, and even went far into the night, and at last, afraid of appearing at home, you slept, if you were not afraid to sleep with such sin upon you, in a shed. Now, Henry, you may speak, if you have any thing to say which can at all excuse you.'

But now Henry had no wish to speak. He saw Mr Walton knew all, though he could not quite tell how, and feeling that any more falsehood would be useless, he was silent.

After waiting awhile, Mr Walton continued, 'By your silence, you acknowledge all that I say to be true. I wish I could see you acknowledge it with sorrow instead of silence. I might then, perhaps, still refrain from finally expelling you. Are you willing, Henry, to confess your faults?'

Mr Walton stopped again, but not one word would Henry speak. Mr Walton therefore continued, 'You do not answer me, Henry; if you will not confess, there is no help for you; I am grieved to do it, but I must expel you; yet once more I will warn you, that the way you are choosing will end in misery, and that the further you go in it the harder will it be for you to retrace your steps. Stop and turn before you go too far.' Then, after a little pause, he said, 'Henry North, take your cap and leave the school, I expel you from among us.'

Not one word did Henry utter, but with his lips compressed, and his face pale, in an agitated manner, he took his cap, which lay near him, and not venturing to raise his eyes, he left the school for ever.

Not a sound was heard when the door closed upon him. The children looked at each other, but none dared speak, and those boys who had partly shared in Henry's fault, looked down, while all listened breathlessly to what Mr Walton would say next.

'Children,' he said, 'it is most painful to me to expel Henry; but I have done it, not only as a punishment to him, but for your sakes also. Will you take warning from him? Some of you, who yielded to the temptation to break through my rule, and indulge your own wishes, might have been led on to the same sin. A single sinful thought, yes, even a thought, children, will often lead to fearful sin. It was but a thought or wish (not in itself wrong, but becoming so, because indulged in opposition to the command of those placed over him) that first tempted Henry to disobey; and what did

it lead him to? Watch, then, even your thoughts, boys, and let not evil get admittance, for you know not what will follow. Simple unquestioning obedience is your safeguard while you are under authority; if you allow thoughts of discontent, or wishes for freedom, to get possession of your hearts, you will soon find that you are led on to disobedient actions, to stubbornness and rebellion. Yield a willing obedience, boys, and then you will not think it hard to obey.'

Mr Walton then punished the other truant boys by making them give up three attendance tickets, the usual penalty for absence without leave, and then, followed by his own class, he left the school for his house, while Miss Walton commenced the lesson with the boys. There was a grave sadness about her manner which they all seemed to feel, showing their sympathy with her feelings, by their subdued attention.

'There is only time, boys, for a short lesson,' she said. 'We have had such a painful interruption this morning. Edward, you say the Collect first.'

He stood up, and repeated, 'Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.'

'What do we say Almighty God sees?' asked Miss Walton.

Alfred. 'That we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves.'

Miss W. Why have we not power to help ourselves?

Charley. Because we are weak.

Miss W. And our weakness, we say, is seen by whom?

Several. By Almighty God.

Miss W. That God sees our weakness is both our comfort and our shame. Why should we be ashamed of it?

Edward. We should be ashamed of God seeing the weakness which makes us do wrong.

Miss W. Yes; we fall into sin because we have not power of ourselves to stand upright; but we should be ashamed of our fall, because we *might* have stood, not in our own strength, but in whose?

Several. In the strength of God.

Miss W. Why, then, is God's knowledge of our weakness, our comfort as well as our shame?

Francis. Because He, seeing our weakness, will help us.

Miss W. Exactly so. He sees 'that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves,' therefore *He* will help us, and this is our comfort. Therefore we pray to Him to keep both—?

'Body and soul,' answered several.

Miss W. Look at Jehoshaphat's prayer when a host of enemies came against him. (2 Chronicles, xx. 12.)

Samuel. 'O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? for *we have no might* against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but *our eyes are upon Thee.*'

Miss W. Now read the 15th verse.

David. 'Be not afraid, nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for *the battle is not your's, but God's.*'

Miss W. They had no power of themselves to help themselves, but what was their comfort?

Charley. God would help them—the battle was His.

Miss W. So it must be with us. We may be comforted, because God knows our weakness, and will help us. Look at what He says Himself in Hosea, xiii. 9.

Edgar. 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in *Me* is thy help.'

Miss W. Again, what did our Saviour say, when speaking of us as branches of Himself, the Vine?

George. 'Without *Me* ye can do nothing.' (St. John, xv. 5.)

Miss W. What do we pray God to keep our bodies from?

All. 'All adversities which may happen to them.'

Miss W. What is meant by keep us 'outwardly in our bodies?' What sort of things hurt our bodies?

Edward. Sickness and accident.

Miss W. Can we see that these things hurt us?

Alfred. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. They are, then, outward dangers, and hurt our bodies—how?

'Outwardly,' said Fred.

Miss W. What outward dangers do we pray to be delivered from in the Litany?

Francis. 'From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death.'

Miss W. But are the things which hurt our souls as outward and visible?

Edward. No; we pray to be kept 'inwardly in our souls.'

Miss W. The things which hurt our souls are not sickness and sorrow: the evils are more hidden, and we must be inwardly preserved from them. What did our Saviour say defiled a man?

George. 'Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that *which cometh out of the mouth*, this defileth a man.' (St. Matt. xv. 11.)

Miss W. How did He afterwards explain Himself?

George. 'Out of the heart proceed *evil thoughts*, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness,

blasphemies : these are the things which defile a man.
(Verses 19, 20.)

Miss W. What is the one evil mentioned in the Collect as hurting our souls ?

All. 'Evil thoughts.'

Miss W. Which we say—

'Assault and hurt the soul,' continued the boys.

Miss W. What do you mean by assault ?

Francis. Attack.

Miss W. And we pray to be defended from the assault of evil thoughts. Where does our Saviour say they come from ?

Andrew. 'The heart.'

Miss W. And can they be in the heart without hurting us ?

Edward. No, they defile a man.

Miss W. Yes, they are the first thing our Saviour mentions as coming from the heart, and defiling a man. If we are not to be hurt by them, they must be taken from out of—what ?

Fred. Our hearts.

Miss W. What do you always pray when you go into Church before service begins ?

Several. 'Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit.'

Miss W. Yes ; the evil lies inwardly in our hearts, therefore we must pray to be kept—how ?

'Inwardly in our souls,' said Charley.

Miss W. Let us now see how evil thoughts assaulting us, hurt us. The evil thought coming from the heart, what has it already done ?

'Defiled the heart,' said Alfred.

Miss W. But, further, if the evil thought is indulged, does the heart become more defiled ?

All. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. And does an evil thought indulged, generally end there ?

'Mr Walton said it often led on to sin,' said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, Charley, and then our souls are more than ever hurt. Tell me, Francis and Samuel, what persuaded you to go walking last Sunday afternoon?

Samuel did not answer, but Francis replied, 'They said it was a shame of you to expect us to go to school on such a lovely day.'

'Please, ma'am, it was not wrong to wish to walk, was it?' asked Alfred.

Miss W. No, Alfred, it was not; but it was wrong to think that it was a shame of us to expect you to come to school. Was it not, Francis?

'Yes, ma'am, I think so now,' he replied; 'but when they put it into my head, then I thought it was a shame.'

Miss W. It was an evil thought of discontent, Francis, and I am glad it did not come from your own mind first; but you see how willing your heart was to receive the evil thought, and take it for your own. Now, if when the thought assaulted you, you had put it away as evil, would it then have hurt you?

'I suppose not,' he replied.

Miss W. No; you might have prevented its hurting you, by refusing it admittance into your own heart. But you did not do this, and your soul was hurt by it. Did the evil stop there?

'No, ma'am,' Francis again replied; 'when that thought got into my mind, I consented to go.'

Miss W. Yes, the evil thought led you on to wrong action, which is, indeed, generally the end of evil thoughts. They will lead you either to evil words, or evil actions. Before saying angry words, what sort of thoughts have you?

'Angry thoughts,' replied Andrew.

Miss W. And *they* are evil. Again, before doing an impure action, what sort of thoughts have you?

Charley. Impure thoughts.

Miss W. But the angry words, or the impure action, would not follow the evil thoughts if you resisted them. It is by *indulging* them that they lead on to more sin. But even without going on to action, what do evil thoughts do?

Alfred. They hurt our souls.

Miss W. Let us take one or two examples. We will take, first, thoughts of pride. What is it that sometimes prevents your acknowledging your faults?

‘You tell us that it is pride,’ answered Charley.

Miss W. Yes, I do. You feel in yourselves that you have done wrong, but you don’t like to say it, because that would be humbling yourselves; which pride won’t allow you to do. Now, that pride is merely a—?

‘Thought,’ answered Edward.

Miss W. Yes, the proud thought comes, ‘I won’t lower myself by saying that I have done wrong,’ and therefore, though you know that you are to blame, you cover your sin. Is it not so, boys?

Edward answered in a low tone, ‘Yes, ma’am, I suppose it is.’ Edward knew from experience, for he had long battled against a naturally proud spirit. It had cost him much labour, nor was his work yet done, but he *was* battling; and while he continued to do so he would improve.

Miss Walton continued: ‘Are proud thoughts evil?’

‘Yes, ma’am,’ they all answered.

Miss W. With what sort of a person does God say He will dwell?

George. ‘Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and *humble* spirit, to revive the spirit of the

humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.' (Isaiah, lvii. 15.)

Miss W. And in Psalm cxxxviii. 6, how are we told God regards the proud?

Andrew. 'For though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly: as for the *proud*, He beholdeth them afar off.'

Miss W. What, then, do proud thoughts do to the soul?

Several. They hurt it.

Miss W. Indeed they do, boys; there is no temper more hateful to God than a proud temper. 'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.' Pride is the root of many, many sins, and therefore I often speak to you about it.

'Please, ma'am,' said Alfred, 'we didn't used to know that it was pride which kept us from acknowledging our faults.'

Miss W. Perhaps you did not; and yet I believe if you had thought seriously about it, you would have seen that it was so: but I know it is not easy to detect pride; and you often think, or *fancy*, I should say, that you are showing only a right spirit of independence, when you are really indulging pride which is hateful to God. If you hope to conquer pride, you must diligently watch against even proud *thoughts*, and pray to God to deliver you from them, and from *all* evil thoughts which assault and hurt the soul. Can you give me any other example of evil thoughts?

'We can have angry thoughts,' said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, and *thoughts* of anger you must also watch against, as well as *words* of anger. Thoughts of envy too, or jealousy, or discontent, are all evil, and they 'assault and hurt the soul,' especially if they are indulged. We may now consider one way more in which our souls are hurt by thoughts. When you are saying your prayers, or singing praises to God,

or reading your Bibles, what ought you to think about?

Alfred. We ought to think of the words we are saying or reading.

Miss W. Yes, and if any thoughts about your work or play come into your minds then, what sort of thoughts are they?

All. Evil thoughts.

Miss W. Are they evil in themselves?

Edward. No, they are evil because they come then.

Miss W. Exactly so. Any thoughts that take our minds off from the worship of God when we are employed in it, are evil, and from such as these, too, we must pray God to defend us. For what do they do to the soul?

All. They hurt it.

Miss W. Yes, they hurt it, as a wound or bruise hurts the body—they injure our soul's health, and make it weak against temptation. Who dwells in our hearts?

Several. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. But will He continue to dwell with us if we *allow* evil thoughts to fill our minds?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No, not if we wilfully indulge in them; but if we watch against them, and pray earnestly for defence against them, He will continue to dwell with us, and instead of evil thoughts He will put good thoughts into our minds, and make us pure like the blessed Angels. Can we have both evil and good thoughts at the same time?

Edward. No; evil thoughts will drive good ones away.

Miss W. And good thoughts will drive evil ones away. What, then, is our best guard against evil thoughts?

‘To try and have good ones,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, when you feel a proud or angry thought rising in your hearts, put it out immediately, and begin to think of *Him* who was lowly and gentle; so will you find it easier to keep the proud thought down, and, at the same time, pray to God for defence against it, and all other evil thoughts which assault and hurt your souls.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Third Sunday in Lent.
COLLECT.

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of Thy humble servants; and stretch forth the right hand of Thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Miss Walton. What sort of desires do we ask God to look upon?

All. 'Hearty desires.'

Miss W. How do we express our desires to Him?

Alfred. By praying to Him.

Miss W. But we do not *always* express our desires; does God know them when unexpressed?

Alfred. Yes, for He can look into our hearts.

Miss W. And He can grant our hearty desires, although they are unuttered, if He sees it to be for our good. Such desires, then, as well as those which we express in prayer, we ask Him to—?

All. Look upon.

Miss W. We will to-day speak of the desires which we express in prayer. When should we say that God looks upon our desires?

Edward. When He hears our prayers.

Miss W. And will God hear prayers that are not hearty?

All. No, ma'am.

Miss W. What do you mean by 'hearty'?

Francis. From the heart.

Miss W. God, then, will only look upon—what sort of desires?

Fred. Desires that come from the heart.

Miss W. The hearty desires of whom do we ask God to look upon?

Several. Of His 'humble servants.'

Miss W. This teaches something more about our prayers besides that they are to be hearty. With what sort of spirit will the humble approach God?

Charley. With an humble spirit.

Miss W. Yes; and it is only when we draw near to God in such a spirit that we can ask Him to look upon, or hear our desires. You shall give me some examples of those who came to Jesus, while He was upon earth, with hearty desires, and with an humble spirit. Can you give me one without help?

After a little thought, Edward answered, 'The woman of Canaan, whom we read of last Sunday.'

'Indeed, Edward,' said Miss Walton, 'I think you have given me one of the best you could; let us look at her conduct. What did she come to Jesus to ask Him to do?'

All. To heal her daughter.

Miss W. How did she show her earnestness?

Francis. She cried out, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David.'

Miss W. Did He listen to her cry?

Several. Not at first.

Miss W. And did His seeming indifference discourage her?

Edward. No; she continued to cry.

Miss W. She cried so earnestly, that what did the disciples do?

Andrew. Begged of Jesus to send her away.

Miss W. From His answer, we judge that they meant He should first grant her request; for what did He reply?

Samuel. 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

Miss W. After this, did she persevere?

Fred. Yes, she came up to Him and worshipped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me.'

Miss W. And when He seemed to rebuff her even a third time, she still pleaded with Him. Of what kind, then, was her desire or prayer?

Edward. Heartily, or from the heart.

Miss W. Now let us see how she showed her humility. What did our Saviour answer the third time?

Several. 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.'

Miss W. What, then, did He seem to compare her to?

Several. A dog.

Miss W. It was common among the Jews to think and speak of the Gentiles as dogs, because they were heathens; and our blessed Saviour, perhaps, used the expression to show how undeserved it was; for He knew what her conduct would be. Was she angry at this title being given to her?

Edward. No, she answered, 'Truth, Lord.'

Miss W. Yes, she felt and allowed her inferiority to the Jews. What did she show by this?

Several. Her humility.

Miss W. Yes, truly, in a most wonderful manner. Of what, then, is she an example to us?

Francis. Praying heartily and with humility.

Miss W. The man who brought his son to be healed after Jesus' transfiguration is another example. You can find and read the account at home, in St. Mark, ix. 14-27. Both he and the woman of Canaan, are examples to us of the way in which we must approach God in prayer. Did Jesus grant their desires?

All. Yes.

Miss W. You said awhile ago, that God would not hear—what sort of prayers?

Charley. Prayers said without our hearts.

Miss W. Can you remember any text which says this ?

George. 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips ; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me.' (St. Matt., xv. 8-9.)

Miss W. Do we, on the other hand, know that God will hear our hearty desires ?

Alfred. Yes, for He heard the prayers of all who came to Him when He was upon earth.

Miss W. Yes, that is one chief ground of hope. He never turned a deaf ear to the hearty and right desires of those who sought help of Him while He was upon earth. But can you tell me any direct promises ?

Edward. 'He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him ; He also will hear their cry, and will help them.' (Psalm cxlv. 19.)

Miss W. Yes ; but can none of you remember the promise that our Saviour gives in His sermon on the mount ?

David. 'Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' (St. Matt. vii. 7.)

Miss W. How, then, must we express our desires to Him ?

Several. Heartily, and with humility.

Miss W. Such desires as these we ask God in the Collect to— ?

'Look upon,' said several.

Miss W. Can we by any outward means show our humility ? In what posture does the Church teach us to pray ?

'Kneeling,' they all answered.

Miss W. And by kneeling we acknowledge our unworthiness. When you go into a gentleman's parlour, would you think of sitting down ?

'Not unless we were told,' said Fred.

Miss W. Why not?

‘Because we ar’n’t gentlemen ourselves,’ answered Francis.

Miss W. You think it right to be respectful to those who are your superiors; now, if it be so with earthly superiors, much more should it be so when we come into the immediate presence of God. When you go into Church, or speak of holy things, how do I always tell you to behave?

‘Reverently,’ replied Edward.

Miss W. And why do I tell you *then* to be reverent?

‘Because God is great,’ said Charley.

Miss W. And what are we, Charley?

Charley. We are sinful.

Miss W. By reverence we acknowledge our own unworthiness and God’s greatness. Then what is reverence a sign of?

Edward. Humility.

Miss W. Yes, a truly humble person will always be reverent, because he will always feel his own littleness. And how can we show reverence?

Alfred. By the manner in which we behave.

Miss W. Tell me some particular ways of being reverent; in Church, for instance?

‘By kneeling,’ said David.

Miss W. But there are two ways of kneeling. I have sometimes seen you, boys, sit down upon your feet when you pretend to be kneeling; or make yourselves comfortable by resting against the wall, or the seat, or laying your heads down; is that reverent kneeling?

‘No, ma’am,’ they answered, while some of them looked ashamed.

Miss W. No, that is as if, instead of sitting down in a gentleman’s parlour, you were to walk up to the wall and lean against it, or take a chair and lean with your arms upon the back.

‘We shouldn’t do that,’ said Fred.

Miss W. No, but you will do equally unseemly things in the presence of God. Now tell me some other way in which we show reverence in Church?

‘By standing when we sing,’ said Charley.

‘And bowing at the name of Jesus,’ said Edward.

Miss W. All these things are acts of reverence; and of what did you say reverence is a sign?

Francis. Humility.

Miss W. It is the same, boys, with standing and bowing, as with kneeling. You may do them irreverently, and then they have no meaning. I saw one of you the other Sunday bow at the holy name of Jesus while you had a smile upon your face: that was not reverence. But does the Church never allow us to sit?

All. Yes, we sit during the sermon and lessons.

Miss W. And can we also sit irreverently?

‘I suppose we can,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, indeed you can: to throw yourselves back upon your seats, and stretch your legs out; or lay your arms upon the back of the seat, and rest your head upon them, making yourselves as comfortable as if you were in your own house, is surely exceedingly irreverent. Supposing you were told to sit down in a gentleman’s parlour, how would you do it?

‘We should sit straight,’ said Francis.

Miss W. I think you would; you certainly would not throw yourselves upon the sofa, or loll in an easy chair. It is a fearful thing, boys, to see that what we would *not* do in the presence of man, we *will* do in the presence of God. What spirit would prevent our doing such things as these?

‘An humble spirit,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Indeed it would. When the blessed angels worship God, we are told they *fall down before the throne*. Look at Rev., vii. 11.

Samuel. 'And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.'

Miss W. And look again in chapter iv. 10, at the account of the worship of the elders.

James. 'The four-and-twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne.'

Miss W. Look once more at what Isaiah says in chapter vi. 2, 3.

Fred. 'Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.'

Miss W. 'They veil their faces while they cry,
Thrice holy to our God most high.'

They see the majesty of God, and are humble, and therefore reverent. How did our blessed Saviour Himself set an example of reverence?

George. He kneeled down to pray.

Miss W. And whom did He drive out of the temple?

Several. Those that bought and sold.

Miss W. We may well fear, boys, lest He should drive us from His spiritual temple for our irreverence and pride. We pray in the Collect that God will hear the hearty desires of His—?

'*Humble servants,*' said Andrew.

Miss W. Yes, but it is of no use to call ourselves humble, if our want of reverence shows that we are not humble. We are but mocking God, and shall bring upon ourselves a curse instead of a blessing. I must speak strongly, boys, for I have been pained to see in some of you a great want of reverence. You forget that you are in the presence of a holy

God, and that you must approach Him in an humble spirit, which *you cannot do while you are irreverent in your behaviour*. Kneeling, standing, and bowing, are all outward helps to, and signs of, inward reverence and humility of heart; and it is hard, if not impossible, to have the inward humility, unless you make a good use of the outward helps which the Church gives you, when she orders you meekly to kneel upon your knees, or reverently to bow your head. What is the next petition in to-day's Collect?

Several. 'Stretch forth the right hand of Thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies.'

Miss W. I have once before explained to you, that when we speak of God's right hand we are speaking figuratively: we mean that He should put forth His strength. In the Collect we speak of the right hand of God's Majesty, and what do we pray that it may be?

Several. 'Our defence.'

Miss W. Now this petition means practically 'the same thing as asking for God's right hand to help and defend us, as we do in—which Collect, boys?

'The one for the third Sunday after the Epiphany,' said George.

Miss W. Tell me, where would a little child run in case of danger?

Alfred. Into its mother's arms.

Miss W. And the mother's arms would then be to the child a—?

'Defence,' they replied.

Miss W. Now, we are like helpless children, and therefore we pray to God to be—?

Andrew. 'Our defence against all our enemies.'

Miss W. And we think of Him, as it were, in mercy stretching out His hand to form a defence for us. A little child might be far away from a mother, and so not be able to run into her arms; but is it so with God?

Charley. No, He is always near us.

Miss W. Then, when our enemies attack us, what can we do?

Edward. Fly to Him as our place of defence.

Miss W. Yes, for His hand is stretched out, and He will be our defence, as David says, in Ps. ix. 9.

Samuel. 'The Lord also will be a defence for the oppressed, even a refuge in due time of trouble.'

Miss W. And in Ps. lxii. 2, 6.

Edgar. 'He is my *defence*, so that I shall not greatly fall.'

Miss W. The prophet Isaiah also speaks of God as the defence or strength of the Church. Isaiah, xxv. 4.

James. 'For Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a *refuge* from the storm, a shadow from the heat.'

Miss W. Can you remember another similar text in Isaiah?

George. 'A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a *covert* from the tempest; . . . as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' (Isaiah, xxxii. 2.)

Miss W. This is, then, the way in which we may understand the Collect; we have many enemies, and we therefore pray to God to stretch forth—?

'His right hand, to be our defence against all our enemies,' repeated Fred.

Miss W. Can you remember any verse where David *prays* to God to be his defence?

Edward. 'Be Thou my strong rock, and house of *defence*.' (Ps. xxxi. 3.)

George. 'Be Thou my *strong hold*, whereunto I may always resort. Thou hast promised to help me, for Thou art my *house of defence* and my castle.' (Ps. lxxi. 2.)

Miss W. Yes, and we, like David, pray that God may be our defence against all our enemies. Who is our great enemy?

All. The devil.

Miss W. What does our Saviour compare the devil to, in the Gospel for to-day?

Edward. To a strong man armed.

Miss W. I gave you a short explanation of this parable a few Sundays ago. You then told me that the palace was—?

Alfred. Man.

Miss W. In what part of man would the devil dwell?

Francis. In the heart of man.

Miss W. The heart of man is, then, his palace. Who can take the palace away from the devil?

Charley. God, who is stronger than the devil.

Miss W. Has God already done this for us?

Several. Yes, at our Baptism.

Miss W. Then He took the palace away from the devil, and made it—whose temple?

Several. 'The temple of the Holy Ghost.' (See 1 Cor. vi. 19.)

Miss W. Even as David says in Ps. cxxiv. 6.

George. 'Our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. The snare is broken, and we are delivered.'

Miss W. Who is meant by the fowler?

Fred. The devil.

Miss W. And our soul escaped from his snare—when?

All. At our Baptism.

Miss W. And who was it that delivered us?

'Almighty God,' again answered the boys.

Miss W. How did He break the snare?

Edward. By taking away all the armour.

Miss W. The devil bound down men by the love of evil. He made evil seem good, and good evil, and as long as man loved the ways of darkness, they would be in—whose snare?

Francis. In the snare of the devil.

Miss W. But what did Jesus bring to light?

George. 'Life and immortality.'

Miss W. And He inclined the heart of man to good instead of evil, and so broke—?

'The snare of the devil,' said Alfred.

Miss W. He also took away the armour when He overcame the devil in the wilderness; but now, to go on. You say we are delivered. Then to whom did we flee for defence?

All. To God.

Miss W. But can the devil return? 'When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man,' what does he seek?

Samuel. He seeketh rest.

Miss W. 'And finding none,' where does he return?

Edward. 'To the house from whence he came out.'

Miss W. That is, back again to his palace—?

'Man's heart,' said Francis.

Miss W. Yes, the devil will try to return into our hearts. Who is still our defence against him?

Charley. God.

Miss W. If the devil finds our hearts empty, that is, not filled with holiness, goodness, and the love of God, what will he do?

Edward. Return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and dwell in our hearts again.

Miss W. Yes, this is a very fearful thought. But God is our defence. In Him we may be safe. We must pray to Him to incline our hearts to that which is good, and dwell with us, and be in us, so shall we be safe from all our enemies.

'And now,' said Miss Walton, 'I must not ask you any more questions, as it is Church-time. I hope you will remember this morning, boys, what I have been saying, and show that you are really humble, by your reverence in the presence of Almighty God.'

Let us follow the boys down to Church, and see how far they acted upon the lessons they had just been taught. I think we shall find that some of them remembered, while others in their heedlessness soon forgot, all that had been said, and indulged themselves in play and idleness.

I think I have told you that Forley Church was old, but had lately been restored, and that it was in the form of a cross. There was a gallery in each transept, and in these the children sat. It was a great pity that there were any galleries, for the children were more tempted to misbehave when they thought themselves out of sight; they forgot that although they were somewhat out of the sight of the congregation, the eye of God was still upon them, and every idle look, or irreverent action, was known to Him. I think if children would try and remember, as they enter the Church, that they are coming into the immediate presence of God, that He is looking down upon them, and that He is great and glorious, far above them in greatness, in holiness, and power; if they would remember that He is angry when they are careless and thoughtless, and could in one moment punish them if He saw fit; if they would try and remember all this, I think they would not rush into Church talking, and sometimes laughing, and perhaps begin to quarrel about a seat or a kneeling-stool; they would not allow themselves in play, or permit vain and foolish thoughts to enter their minds without a struggle to resist them. No, surely, dear children, you would not do these things, but you would enter the Church gently and humbly, you would kneel down quietly, and say your prayers thoughtfully, then you would take your seat without talking at all, or, if you were obliged to speak, you would do it in a whisper; when service began you would try and pay attention to what was going on, ~~keeping~~ *keeping* your eyes fixed upon your books, and saying

the responses in an humble voice, and listening to the lessons with meek attention; and when the service was over, you would not rush out of Church as if weary of God's worship, but you would first ask Him to forgive you your vain wandering thoughts, and then you would quietly leave the Church without noise and tumult. Yes, dear children, I think you would do all this, if you would only try and remember that the Church is not a common place, nor the worship of God a common employment. Try, then, try your best, so will God hear your humble prayers, and look upon your hearty desires, and will bless you.

But to return to the Forley boys. They walked down to Church in tolerably good order, both Mr and Miss Walton keeping near them. They talked and laughed as they went along, and this Mr Walton did not object to, if they were not too noisy, nor left their ranks. When, however, they reached the Church-yard gate, they stood for a moment, and all were made silent, and silent they were told to remain, and to take their places without noise or dispute; sometimes they did this, sometimes they forgot. As Miss Walton stood at the foot of the gallery stairs this day, she heard Edgar call out, in quite a loud tone, 'Do not crush so, boys; will you be quiet?'

She pressed forward to follow, and found a dispute had arisen between him and John Highman about the corner seat, which one of the teachers in vain tried to settle. However, she fixed it by allowing neither of them to have the wished-for place, but removed them both to the back of the gallery. One by one the children followed her up, and most of them took their seats in quiet silence, the singers occupying the front places, amongst whom were Edward, Charley, George, Samuel, little James, and David. When all had entered, a signal being given, they knelt down, and time was allowed them to say the first Collect in the Communion service, which

any of my readers can find for themselves ; it is one very suitable to say before you begin the public worship of God.

When the children had said this prayer, they rose, and very soon service commenced. And pleasant it was to hear them, with one voice, join in the confession, the singers taking the lead, that all might speak on one note, and that there should be no discord in prayer, while all meekly knelt upon their knees ; and pleasant it was to hear those who were able, join in the chants, which were sung from side to side, or lifting up their voices in psalms of praise.

At first all the children seemed attentive, but after a while some felt weary, and they did not resist the feeling, but began to be listless and inattentive. George shut his book, as if weary of following the holy words, but still he ventured to say Amen, as if he had been attending. James was looking down into the body of the Church, as though he had gone there not to pray, but to see who else was praying, and Samuel laid his head on the front as if he intended to go to sleep ; and poor Miss Walton, who would have been glad of no interruption, was obliged to go and speak to them, and remind them where they were.

Others, however, did seem to try and be attentive. Edward and Charley kept their eyes steadily upon their books, which was the best thing they could do to enable them to follow the words with their hearts. Alfred and Andrew sat near Miss Walton, which the boys always liked to do if they could ; and they, too, showed all outward reverence, which we must hope was a sign of reverence of heart. During the sermon poor little Alfred had hard work to keep awake, and at one time he was obliged to stand up to avoid dropping off, but he tried to rouse himself, and to listen to Mr Walton, and he at length succeeded, and told Miss Walton in the afternoon some things which had been said in the sermon. There was

seldom a Sunday when the children could not understand some part of the sermon, even if other portions were difficult.

The sermon being ended, the children and people arose with one accord, and stood during the ascription of glory to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Then, after joining in the prayer for the whole Church militant here on earth, they once more sank upon their knees, and received the parting blessing. David, however, seemed to forget that he knelt to receive a blessing, and began to put his prayer-book into his pocket, and feel for his cap. Others, I am sorry to say, did the same, and so lost the blessing they might have had.

Before rising from their knees the boys were taught to say the following short prayer, which perhaps my readers may like to say too:—

O, blessed Jesus, forgive me
My vain wandering thoughts, and hear me;
Nor suffer me ever to leave Thee:
From the malice of the enemy defend me;
In the hour of death call me,
And give me a place beside Thee;
That with Thy holy angels I may praise Thee,
For ever and ever. Amen.

As they did not say this aloud, we cannot tell how many even repeated the words, nor can we know whose hearts went with the words. We hope even the inattentive did not leave Church without asking pardon for their vain wandering thoughts, and we trust that those who had drawn near to God in Church, would strive, as well as pray, never to leave Him, but being defended from the ill-will of the devil, would at last be received into a place in heaven, where, with the holy angels, they might praise God for ever and ever.

We have now, my readers, followed the boys of Forley through a morning service, not that you may merely read the account and then shut the book, and

think how naughty Edgar and David were, and how good Charley and Andrew were, but that you may see in them a likeness of yourselves. Turn from the thought of them to the thought of yourselves, and see how often you have done worse than George or James. Have you not often played and been inattentive, even perhaps while you have been saying the most holy words? If any of you are singers in Church, have you never found your places in your note books while you pretended to be praying? or have you never sung holy words, or repeated in tone the versicles and Psalms, while your eyes have been wandering about the Church, looking, perhaps, at every person who comes in, and your thoughts any where but fixed on the words you were saying? Think about yourselves, and be sorry for your past inattention, and if you admire Edward or Charley, try to follow their example: admiring them only will not do you any good; but if, like them, you try to act upon the advice here given you, then I shall be glad I have told you about them, glad that you should admire them, glad that you should think about them.

I will tell you a few words about Edward before I conclude.

He was, as I dare say you have discovered for yourselves, a steady, good boy, and such he had been more or less ever since Miss Walton knew him. He was also quick in his learning, and thoughtful in his answers, and generally tried to act upon the lessons which were taught him in the school. Perhaps, being the oldest child of his family, and being left without a mother just when he was of an age to feel responsible in a degree for his younger brothers and sisters, he had become more thoughtful than most boys of his age. The children of his family had learned to look up to him as to a mother, and at his knees the younger ones used to kneel to say their

morning and evening prayers, after their mother was taken from them. He it was also who would prepare, or help to prepare, them for school, and see them safely in bed at night, and often make ready their meals for them, so that he had, as far as he could, taken a mother's place. These things had helped to make him thoughtful, but they had also encouraged his naturally independent spirit. His father left him very much to himself, and he had no mother to submit to; and this made it hard for him to submit to any one. When Miss Walton first knew him, the smallest fault-finding would rouse his proud spirit, and instead of acknowledging his fault, he would listen to reproof in silence, but with an expression of unconcern upon his countenance. Nor did he like to be bound down by the rules of the school, and in little ways he would break them without any very open disobedience. This pride of heart had often made him misbehave when in the House of God, and he would shut his book and sometimes not respond, merely to show, apparently, that he was his own master. Yet it was seldom that he got into open disgrace; that, perhaps, he felt would have lowered him as much as any thing, and therefore he carefully avoided it.

Once, however, one of the teachers unintentionally accused him falsely. This roused his anger, and when a few minutes afterwards Miss Walton bid him change his seat, he would not move, but answered, in an irritable manner, that he was in his own place. This was the first time he had ever openly disobeyed her. She repeated her command without success, and he was at last only conquered by Mr Walton's authority, and obliged to be punished for his disobedience. For some time after this, the evil spirit of pride seemed to gain complete mastery over him, and to urge him on to many acts of rebellion, making him irritable in his temper, and independent in his

actions. Miss Walton was troubled and grieved, hardly knowing what step to take. One evening, however, she sent for him to her own house, and spoke kindly and seriously to him about his conduct, showing him how pride was at the bottom of it all; that if he had been meek and lowly of heart, he would have borne to be unjustly blamed without anger, and have taken his punishment for his after-disobedience humbly, instead of revolting against it. At first he would not allow that pride had anything to do with it, but by patient argument Miss Walton convinced him, and showed him the exceeding sinfulness of it, and how it led him into many other faults. Before he left her he was quite subdued, and acknowledged, unreservedly, his past misconduct. He bent his steps homeward with a spirit humbled, and with a deeper and truer knowledge of himself. Nor was he satisfied with this one acknowledgment, but he set himself from that day to fight against his pride; and though it cost him many a struggle, and he often failed, being overcome by temptation, still, as he did not give up the struggle, he went on improving, and, as I said before, as long as he continued to try, he would continue to improve.

When he first appears before my readers, he had been long striving against his besetting fault. They see him greatly altered, and not as he was when he disobeyed Miss Walton. You see him trying to act upon the lessons he was taught, and not ashamed to be seen doing so: and you now see him trying more earnestly than ever, hoping at the coming Easter, to be admitted to the Feast of the Holy Communion. Many months he had been preparing, and now the time was fast approaching, and he knew that it was an awful and solemn thing to draw so near to God and that he must with all diligence prepare for it.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Fourth Sunday in Lent.

COLLECT.

*int, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we, who
r our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished,
y the comfort of Thy grace may mercifully be
elieved; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

OLD you in my last chapter that Edward was
ing forward to Easter with no common feelings,
he then hoped to receive, for the first time, the
ly Communion. I ought also to have told you
t he was already confirmed, together with Samuel
Andrew, and Henry, whom we have lost from
ng us. But Samuel was thoughtless, and did not
a to prepare himself for that Holy Feast, and An-
w was scarcely sufficiently taught. He was, how-
r, learning more every day, and not only learning,
acting upon what he learned; so that he too
ed, if not at Easter, at least by Whit-Sunday, to
aw near with faith, and take that holy Sacrament
his comfort.' He and Edward, together with some
ers, were receiving instruction from Mr Walton to
them to approach worthily, and with understand-
hearts. You may then feel sure that Edward
ld, at this time, be more especially watchful and
ful to keep himself pure, to let no pride of heart, or
bedience, or thoughtlessness, unfit him to eat of
bread, and drink of that cup. And, if his con-
t had for a while, in days gone by, pained and per-
ed his kind teacher, it now rejoiced and en-
o. 22.

couraged her, for she saw in him daily signs of daily growth in the life of holiness.

Let us now join the boys in their Sunday lesson at Miss Walton's house.

'What do we say, in the Collect, we deserve for our evil deeds?' she asked.

All. To be punished.

Miss W. What do we pray God to grant?

Edward. That 'by the comfort of His grace we may mercifully be relieved.'

Miss W. What does 'to relieve' mean?

Francis. To help.

Miss W. Yes, or to ease. If we are in pain, and we take something which eases the pain, we say we are—?

'Relieved,' said several.

Miss W. If the pain has not quite gone, but is only lessened, what should we still say we had obtained—?

'Ease, or relief,' said Edward.

Miss W. To be relieved, then, means, to be eased or comforted; or, supposing you were carrying some great weight, and anybody were to come and help you to carry it, then you would be—what?

Fred. Relieved.

Miss W. Would the whole weight be taken from you?

'No, but it would be lightened,' said Edward.

Miss W. What does 'to relieve,' mean, then, besides to ease and comfort?

'To lighten,' said several.

Miss W. Yes, to lighten or alleviate. Now, what do we pray to be relieved from?

All. The punishment we deserve.

Miss W. Which you say we—?

'*Worthily* deserve,' said several.

Miss W. Have we, in any other Collect, made a similar confession?

George. Yes, in the Collect for Septuagesima Sunday.

Miss W. There we said, we *are* punished justly ; do we say this to-day ?

Alfred. No, we only say we *deserve* to be, not that we *are*.

Miss W. It is not, then, present punishment which we mean, so much as—what, boys ?

Charley. The punishment to come.

Miss W. And this punishment we say we *worthily* deserve, which means the same as justly deserve. Why are we worthy of punishment ?

Francis. Because we sin when we might do better.

Miss W. If, then, there is a punishment to come, which we deserve because of our evil deeds, what ought we to fear ?

Several. The punishment.

Miss W. Supposing you have any of you offended your master, and you know that he will punish you when he finds it out, how does it make you feel ?

‘Very unhappy, and frightened to see him,’ said *Charley*.

Miss W. Yes, the fear of punishment which you know you deserve, makes you unhappy. Now, if you feel thus with respect to the punishment your earthly master would give, how ought you to feel when you remember the eternal punishment in store for the wicked ?

Alfred. We ought to be much more afraid of that.

Miss W. Now, suppose for a moment that there were no way of escape, that we were quite sure of going to hell when we die, what sort of a life would this be ?

‘Oh ! we never could be happy,’ said *Charley*, ‘it would be so dreadful.’

Miss W. Indeed it would ; far more dreadful than we can bear to think about. But have we been left thus without hope ?

Alfred. No, we can escape punishment if we try to be good.

Miss W. For whose sake, Alfred?

‘For Jesus Christ’s sake,’ he replied, bowing his head as he named that holy Name.

Miss W. Yes, God has *already relieved* us of our hopeless dread of punishment, by making a way for us to escape. But has He taken all fear away from us?

Edward. No, because we still deserve punishment.

Miss W. And therefore we must still fear. Then we are like a child who has wilfully disobeyed a master, expecting punishment, are we?

‘No,’ said Alfred, ‘not exactly, because we may be pardoned for Jesus Christ’s sake.’

Miss W. True, Alfred, there is One to help us by the comfort of His Grace, we may be—?

‘Mercifully relieved,’ said several.

Miss W. But, although the punishment has not actually come upon us, we know that we deserve it, and even the feeling of deserving it would be a great burden for us to bear without—what, boys?

‘The comfort of God’s grace relieving us,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Relieving us, or easing us, or lightening the load of fear, by inspiring hope. This, I think, boys, is the way in which we must understand today’s Collect. We do not so much pray to be delivered from punishment, as to be relieved of the feeling of our deserving punishment—a feeling that we could not bear, if left to ourselves: but what makes us deserve punishment?

All. Our evil deeds.

Miss W. To understand, then, what we do, we must think over, and know all our sins, and that we cannot bear their weight ourselves; it would crush and sink us down into despair. Now, this thought should lead us to see why this Collect is appointed for this season of the year. What is Lent a time of?

All. Sorrow.

Miss W. What must we think about?

Several. Our sins.

Miss W. Only about some sins?

Alfred. No, about all our sins; about all we have ever done wrong.

Miss W. As we think and think, do fresh ones come into our minds, which, without much thought, would have been passed over?

‘Yes, sometimes,’ said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, the more we try to remember our sins, the more numerous they seem. And will they seem lighter, or greater, the more we think about them?

‘Greater,’ said Andrew.

‘And,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘the greater they seem to us, what shall we feel more and more that we worthily deserve?’

‘To be punished,’ said Francis.

Miss W. Yes, we learn to abhor ourselves, and to acknowledge that we worthily deserve to be punished. And having come to this conviction, what would be the consequence if we were then left to ourselves?

Charley. We should be very frightened, and unhappy.

Miss W. We should indeed; we should sink under the weight of deserved punishment, even before it came; what, therefore, does the Church teach us to pray?

Edward. ‘That we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of God’s grace may mercifully be relieved, through our Lord Jesus Christ.’

Miss W. Do you remember what David says about the fear of death?

George. ‘My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.’ (Ps. lv. 4, 5.)

Miss W. Again, in Ps. cxvi. 3.

James. 'The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.'

Miss W. In this his distress, of whom did he seek help?

Charley. 'I will call upon the Name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul.' (Verse 4.)

Miss W. And in the seventh verse he says, 'Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul.' And why?

'Thou hast delivered my soul *from death*, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling,' continued Fred.

Miss W. How, then, does God relieve us under a sense of deserved punishment?

Several. By the comfort of His grace.

Miss W. Yes, by His grace He will preserve our souls from—?

'Death,' said Fred.

Miss W. And our feet from—?

'Falling,' they all replied.

Miss W. Yes, and even our eyes from tears, so far as it is good for us. And being thus comforted and *relieved*, what weight are we better able to bear?

Edward. The dread of deserved punishment.

Miss W. Exactly. The weight is lightened by the comfort of God's grace. There are many ways in which God bestows His grace for our comfort and relief, but we must only mention one to-day, and that one shall be our chief and best relief. What did you say made us fear punishment?

Edward. The knowledge of our guilt.

Miss W. But is there no way for our sins to be pardoned?

Several. Yes; through the death of Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Where do we receive the full benefit of His death, Andrew?

'In the Holy Communion,' he replied.

Miss W. Our unpardoned sin makes us deserve—what punishment?

'Eternal death,' said Francis.

Miss W. But in the Holy Communion what do we receive when we come with penitence and faith?

‘Pardon,’ answered Edward and Andrew.

Miss W. Yes; and the Body and Blood of Christ will preserve our soul *from* death, and *unto*—what, Edward?

‘Everlasting life,’ he answered.

Miss W. Do you remember what our Saviour Himself says about eternal life being given by the eating of His Body and the drinking of His Blood?

Edward. ‘Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath *eternal life*; and I will raise him up at the last day.’ (St. John, vi. 54.)

Miss W. How then can we escape the punishment we deserve?

Andrew. By the eating of His Body, and the drinking of His Blood.

Miss W. Yes; if we do this in *faith and obedience*, we shall, for the sake of Him who died for us, obtain eternal life, and escape the snares of death. Alfred, you read the 51st verse of the same chapter.

Alfred read: ‘I am the living bread which came down from heaven: *if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever*: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.’

Miss W. Here, then, boys, is our best and greatest comfort. Here is the grace of God abundantly poured out for the relief of our souls. Some of you are hoping soon to receive this blessed gift. All of you ought to be looking forward to it with longing hope, and be endeavouring diligently to prepare for it, because it is only a blessing to those who receive it worthily. What does the Catechism teach us are the benefits those receive, who faithfully partake of the Body and Blood of Christ?

All. ‘The strengthening and refreshing of our souls.’

Miss W. And is not the refreshing of our souls what we pray for in the Collect?

Fred. Yes; that by the comfort of Thy grace we may mercifully be relieved.

Miss W. By the grace given at that Holy Feast, our souls are relieved, by receiving strength to bear the trials or sorrows we may have to endure; and they are also refreshed and comforted. We become one with whom?

Edward. With Christ.

Miss W. And being one with Him, we have no longer an overwhelming fear of punishment, for in Him we receive eternal life, trusting His promise that because He lives, we shall live also. Do we still continue to deserve punishment?

All. Yes, because we are still sinful.

Miss W. We deserve it, but we escape it through whom?

Several. Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Miss W. So long as we are one with Him, we are safe, and our souls are relieved from the weight of our sins, and the fear of punishment. This is a great mystery, and one that I fear to speak often to you about, lest you should not listen reverently; but I have ventured to do so to-day, because some of you will soon receive this wondrous gift of renewed life, if you come worthily to the feast provided for you. And I want you *all* to think about it, especially those who have been, or are old enough to be, confirmed. Each one think about it for himself, and see what a blessing is in store for you; and remember how much, how very much, you lose by wilfully turning away from the blessing provided for you. Those who cannot come because they are not old enough, will receive grace in other appointed ways; but those who *can* come and *will* not, are wilfully turning away from eternal life which is there offered.

As Miss Walton ceased speaking, her brother entered the room, having some time before ended

his duties in the school, and returned home. 'Oh, here is Mr Walton,' cried Alfred, 'perhaps he will tell us a story to-day.'

'Yes,' replied Mr Walton, 'I will, very gladly, if you will tell me what it is to be about.'

'Please, ma'am, will you tell Mr Walton; I don't know how.'

Miss Walton smiled at little Alfred's simplicity, and then turning to her brother, said, 'I am very glad that you have come in time to tell them a story before they go, as I had not provided one. I have been speaking to the boys about the fear of deserved punishment, and how God lightens that fear for true penitents, and helps them to bear it.'

'Oh,' replied Mr Walton, 'I can easily tell them a story on that subject, as it is the very same as that on which I have been catechising my own class. Bring me a chair, Charley, out of the other room. Thank you. Now sit quietly, and I will tell you a pretty story about relief under the fear of deserved punishment.'

JOHN HIND THE POSTMAN.

ABOUT five-and-twenty years ago, I was curate in a country parish on the Weald of Kent. One evening, a little after nine o'clock, just as we had finished prayers, I was called out to baptize a child at the far end of the parish, about three miles and a half from the village in which I lived. It was a cloudy night, but not so dark as to require a lantern, and warm for the season of the year. I was a quick walker in those days, and before I had gone a quarter of a mile, I overtook the postman, John Hind, who was carrying our letters to the nearest town, about nine miles distant.

'Good evening, John,' I said, as I came near enough to see who it was.

He started suddenly, saying, 'Oh, sir! is that you? I didn't expect to see you at this time of night.'

'Why, John, you were surely not frightened,' I replied; 'I wonder you should jump in that way, on hearing a friendly voice. You are used enough to walking in the dark.'

He seemed rather confused, and answered, with hesitation, 'I didn't think it was you, sir, till I heard your voice; and that made me start.'

I made him no answer, but secretly wondered what could have happened to make such a bold man nervous. I now remembered that I had seen him looking, as I fancied, very unhappy in Church the Sunday before; and I began to fear there must be something wrong. So I spoke to him again, kindly, but somewhat seriously, inquiring, 'I hope, John, there is nothing on your conscience to make a coward of you? This is not the first time I have met you in the dark, and I never saw you show anything like fear before.'

'What makes you think, sir, that I have anything on my conscience?' he asked, quickly, and uneasily.

'Why, John, I thought on Sunday you looked unhappy, and I noticed you were much affected at one part of the sermon; and that, joined with your behaviour this evening, made me fear there was something amiss. If I can help you, John, or advise you, do not fear to ask my advice.'

He was silent for a considerable time, and I could feel that there was a struggle going on in his mind. At length he said, 'Well, sir, I cannot be worse than I am now, so I may as well tell you all about it. I have not known what to do with myself for the last three weeks. I wouldn't go to Church till last Sunday, and then I thought I would go no more. While you were preaching, sir, I thought you knew all about it; but after I came to think it

over, I was sure you couldn't know. Ah! sir, it is a hard thing for an honest man to lose his character. I know it is my own fault; but that only makes it worse to bear.'

'Indeed, you speak truly there, John,' I said; 'a wounded conscience is the worst of all miseries to bear. But what does it all mean, John? You have always borne a good character for honesty.'

'Yes, sir,' he answered, 'I know I have; but I can't bear to think of that now, when I know I don't deserve it. Don't you ask me any questions now, sir, and I will tell you all about it. I can do it better here on the road, in the dark, than I could do anywhere else, for just where you overtook me is where I always feel it worst.'

'You know, sir, I have carried letters on this road for ten years now, and I had always a light heart till three weeks ago. I have had many a letter in my hand (besides more locked up in the bag) to take to Morton, and post there, and I never thought of taking one. But last Saturday three weeks, returning from Morton with the letters (I started away from the Post Office about half past four. I ought to have been off at four, and that made me in a hurry), just as I got outside the town I found that our bag, the Selton bag, was open. Well, I thought, this is strange; I saw Mr Faible lock the bag; I can't understand it. So I waited till I got to widow Hunt's cottage, and then examined the bag by the light of the candle shining through her window (you know, sir, she's ill, and burns a rushlight), and then I found the lock was turned, but without taking hold of the hasp. First I thought I would go back and get Mr Faible to lock it. Something told me I ought to do that; but then I remembered I was half an hour late; so I said it was no use, I shouldn't touch the letters, I'd better get on as fast as I could. I went on very well for a time; but then

I began to think I should like to know how many letters there were, and whether I should have to go far out of the village to deliver them, so I began to count them in the dark. There were sixteen ; and one seemed rather heavy, though it was little. When I came to Hendale, I found that Mr Olave was in bed, and it was a long time before I could make him get up to take in the Hendale bag. This made me angry, for it was very cold, and I knew I was late. Well, sir, when I came hereabouts, the day began to break, and I thought I would see who the money-letter was for. I took it out, and held it towards the east : it was some time before I could make out the direction ; but at last I found it was for Farmer Gripp, at the Hove. Well, sir, I had worked for him some years ago, and I always thought he had been hard with me about a field of barley I cut for him one summer. I always thought he had done me wrong ; and while I held his letter in my hand it all came back again to me ; and then, I suppose, the devil put it into my heart that now I might repay myself. My wife, too, was very weak, after a long illness, and I thought if I could get a few shillings, it would buy her a little mutton for broth. But to come to the point ; I opened the letter, sir, just in the valley where you overtook me, only I was then going the other way. I did it there, because I thought no one would see me, the road turns so short both ways. But, oh ! sir, the next minute I repented. I would have given all the world to shut the letter up again ; but that I couldn't do, it was torn so much in opening.'

Here the poor fellow burst into tears, and it was some time before he could speak again. At length I asked him what he had done with the money.

'Why, sir,' he replied, 'instead of two or three shillings, as I expected, I found two half-sovereigns in a card. And I knew that Farmer Gripp had not wronged me more than half-a-crown ; besides, I now

began to feel that it was all wrong. I was afraid of the letter, and afraid of the money. I was afraid, too, that the postmaster would find out that the bag was unlocked, and so all would be discovered. My hands trembled so that I could hardly hand him the bag. But he put the key in, and turned it round without looking at the hasp, and then opened the bag, counted the letters, fifteen in number, and putting them back in their places, told me to deliver them quickly, as it was very late. For a minute my heart seemed quite light, but not long. I soon delivered the letters: six of them were for you, sir, and four for the squire, and all the others for people on the green; and then I turned towards home. You would hardly believe it, sir, but I was afraid to see Lucy, and felt quite glad when I found she was not in the kitchen. I looked out of the back window, and saw her down at the bottom of the garden, feeding the pigs (it was the first time she could get so far for many a day), so I thought I would burn the letter, for fear it should rise up as a witness against me. When Lucy came in, she said, "I'm so glad to see you, John, what makes you so late?"

"I started late," I replied, "from Morton, and had to stay at Hendale ever so long before Mr Olave would get up. I'm quite tired of getting blamed for his fault, and I won't stand it much longer."

"Well, never mind that now, John," she answered. "I want you to look pleased; the Squire has sent me a bit of mutton, and promised I shall have more when that is done, till I have quite recovered my strength."

"My heart smote me, sir, when she spoke of the mutton, and I began to look upon myself as nothing better than a thief. All Lucy could do she could not make me cheerful. I determined not to touch the money, and I durstn't tell Lucy anything about it. Oh, sir, I have been miserable about it ever

since. I was afraid to look any one in the face, and I kept out of your way till last Sunday, and then I thought if I did not come to Church you would come and look after me. But my worst time, sir, has been going to and fro along this road, especially home again. The bag hangs round my neck, sir, like a leaden weight, and I think every morning there must be a letter in it for poor Mr Gripp (though *he* wouldn't get it, poorman), to inquire whether he ever received the money, and then I think it will all come out, and I shall be disgraced, and turned off, and nobody will ever employ me again.'

'Indeed, you have told me a sad story, John,' I replied. 'No wonder your conscience will not let you rest. No wonder your punishment falls heavily upon you, even in expectation. But, tell me, John, have you thought of your sin before God? Have you thought of the punishment which He will inflict upon you, if you do not repent?'

'Indeed, sir,' he earnestly answered, 'I have thought a great deal about it. I have prayed to be forgiven; but I have been almost afraid to pray since poor Mr Gripp died so suddenly last Wednesday week. I seem to see him in his coffin every time I kneel down to pray. At night, sir, I think of my sin, and am afraid of death, and in the day-time I think how it will be if I am found out.'

'But there is another thought for you,' I said. 'Have you made amends?'

'No, sir,' he answered, 'I have not, and that, too, makes me afraid to pray. I should like to have taken the money to Mr Gripp the next day, only I was afraid he would give information, and then my character would be gone for ever. But now, sir, I feel that I can never make any amends to him I wronged, and I can never ask his pardon in this world; and that lies heavy on my conscience.'

I considered for some time before I made any

further remark, and then I inquired, 'Are you ready now, John, to do all that lies in your power to make amends, in spite of the temporal consequences? If you are, if you give this token of true repentance, I will give you all the relief and consolation in my power, and try to lead you to a better comforter.'

'I will try my best, sir,' was his reply. 'And I feel it a comfort already to have told you, and to have had your advice.'

'Call, then, at my house,' I said, 'to-morrow morning, after you have delivered the letters, and bring the money with you, and I will see what can be done for you.'

'I will, sir,' he replied, 'and thank you heartily for your kindness.'

'May God bless you,' I added, 'and help you to repent in earnest; and now I must say good night, as I am going to this cottage.'

He wished me good night, and proceeded on his lonely way towards Morton, sad at heart, and fearing some great misery would come upon him yet, on account of his sin (for a grievous sin it was), but comforted and relieved by having told his grief, and listened to words of compassion and counsel.

And now, boys, I must hurry to the end of my story, for I find it is getting very late.

John Hind came to me next morning. I went with him to Widow Gripp's, and heard him tell her all the truth, and ask her pardon, and saw him give her back the money which he had so wrongfully taken. Mrs Gripp was a kind-hearted woman, and had received many little kind attentions from poor Hind, when he had been working in former years for her husband. She had always looked upon Hind as an honest man, and, pleased to see the money safely delivered to her, she readily promised me to say *nothing of Hind's misdemeanour in the neighbourhood.* Next morning Hind had to carry to her

the letter of inquiry he had so long dreaded. And, at his request, she wrote word that her money had been wrongfully detained, for more than three weeks, by a messenger, whom she did not name, but that it had now come safely to hand.

I had occasion to see poor Hind frequently after that. The anxiety he had endured brought on a severe illness, from which he did not recover for two months. Another person was appointed to take his place as letter-carrier for the time. But, on his recovery, he would not apply to be re-appointed. He said that he had violated his trust once, and he might perhaps do the same again if temptation were put in his way. At least, he did not like that he should continue to be trusted by the Post-office authorities, without having acknowledged to them his breach of trust. But now that he was no longer in their employment, he did not seem called upon to make any further confession, after Mrs Gripp had forgiven him, and refused to inform against him, as she might have done.

Talking to me, as he lay on his sick bed, of all that had happened, he said one day, 'I should not like you, sir, to mention what I have told you in the neighbourhood. But if you ever think the story of my temptation, and the misery it brought upon me, and the relief I found in repentance, will do good to any body far away, or in future years, I hope you will tell it as a warning.' So now, boys, I have told it you, five-and-twenty years after it happened, and far away from the Weald of Kent. If, then, you are ever tempted to breach of trust, think of John Hind.

The boys wished Mr and Miss Walton good afternoon, and, running down the hill, dispersed to their respective homes.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Fifth Sunday in Lent.

COLLECT.

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, mercifully to look upon Thy people; that by Thy great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore, both in body and soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A LITTLE before school-hour on the morning of the fifth Sunday in Lent, Alfred came up to Mr Walton's house to bring a note that he said a gentleman had given him to carry to Mr Walton. It was a cold, blustering day in March. All night long the wind had been howling dismally, and the rain pattering against the windows. Now, however, the rain had cleared away, but there were many wild-looking clouds flying across the deep blue sky, and the wind, still unchecked, swept along with resistless force.

Little Alfred's hair was blown into disorder, and his cheeks were cut with facing the wind as he had mounted the hill towards the house.

'You look cold,' said Miss Walton, as he stood, after delivering the note, waiting to see whether he was wanted. 'Come to the fire and warm yourself.'

Alfred gladly obeyed, for his hands were almost powerless with the cold. Miss Walton placed him a little stool, and he sat down by the fire. 'You may sit there till school-time,' she said, 'if you like.'

Mr Walton's note was to ask him to take an afternoon duty, and he left the room and went to his study to answer it, while little Alfred sat by the fire.

‘Did you hear the wind in the night, Alfred?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘Oh, yes, I heard it; it did blow *just about*,’ he answered. . ‘I was almost afraid to lie in bed.’

‘You were as safe in bed as anywhere, Alfred were you not?’ said Miss Walton.

‘Yes,’ he answered. ‘I thought God could take care of me, and so I lay still.’

‘Unless,’ said Miss Walton, ‘you knew there was some particular danger where your bed stood, which made it necessary for you to move, it was better to lie still and trust yourself to God. He can take care of you in the greatest danger.’

‘Do you know,’ he said, ‘the wind always makes me think how very great God must be. It seems so wonderful to hear so much noise, and sometimes to see so much harm done, and yet not to be able to see the wind; don’t you think so?’

‘It is very wonderful,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘“We hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.”’

‘It comes from God, doesn’t it?’ asked Alfred.

‘It comes from Him thus far,’ replied Miss Walton, ‘that He appoints when it shall blow, and when it shall be calm; He governs even the winds, and they obey Him.’

‘But why does it ever blow?’ he asked again.

‘Because, my dear boy, it does good; it makes the air clear and healthy. Do you not remember how God took away the plague of locusts?’

‘Yes, He made a strong west wind to blow. But we can’t get wind whenever we like, to make it healthy.’

‘No, certainly we cannot,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘But God can send it whenever He sees that it is needed. I was just looking over the Collect when you came in. What do we there ask of God?’

‘That we may be governed and preserved ever more, both in body and soul,’ answered Alfred.

‘Yes, God’s governing power appoints every thing ; when the wind must blow, and when it is to be calm—when it is to rain, and when it is to be fair—when hot and when cold ; and because He is good, he appoints every thing for the best, both for our bodies and souls, if we are really His people.’

‘But does not the wind sometimes do harm ?’ Alfred asked.

‘In some particular instance it may do harm ; for example, a ship may be wrecked, and lives lost, but even then God had some good purpose in sending it, that He knows, though we may not.’

‘I like to think that,’ he answered, looking up into Miss Walton’s face, ‘because I thought last night how dreadful it must be for people at sea, and I felt unhappy, and I shall like to think another time that God knows what is best.’

‘Yes, dear boy, that thought may often comfort us when nothing else can. He looks down mercifully upon His people, and will of His great goodness evermore govern and preserve them in the way that is best for them, though we cannot tell how.’

As Miss Walton stopped speaking, her brother entered the room with the note, and asked Alfred to carry it to James Ringwood, where, he said, the person who had given the note to Alfred would call for it.

‘You will have to leave the fire, you see, after all,’ said Miss Walton, smiling. ‘However, never mind, but make haste and get back to school. I am going to get ready now.’

Alfred’s message took him so long, that he could not get into school by prayer-time, but before all had said the Collects he was in his place, so that he did not miss any of the lesson.

‘Do you know what Sunday this is called ?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘It is the fifth Sunday in Lent,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes, but it is also called Passion Sunday. What is the last week in Lent called?

Several. Passion week.

Miss W. Why?

Edward. Because we read and think then of Christ's sufferings.

Miss W. Yes, or of His Passion, as it is called. And what is the Epistle about to-day?

Alfred. About Christ's offering Himself without spot to God.

Miss W. And when did He offer Himself?

Several. When He suffered on the cross.

Miss W. Yes; to-day we first begin to commemorate His Passion, and therefore what is to-day called?

All. Passion Sunday.

Miss W. And in the Gospel we read of our Lord being slandered—by whom?

Francis. By the Jews.

Miss W. What did they call Him?

Fred. A Samaritan; and they said He had a devil.

Miss W. Yes; and Bishop Sparrow says this was a 'thorn in His side, and part of His Passion.' Now we will turn to the Collect. Whom do we pray God mercifully to look upon?

Charley. His people.

Miss W. And why do we ask Him to look mercifully upon them?

Several. 'That they may be governed and preserved evermore.'

Miss W. Who governs a people?

Fred. A king.

Miss W. It is not always a king, is it, Fred?

'No, sometimes a queen,' said David.

Miss W. Now give me a name that would do for either king or queen?

'Sovereign,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, a sovereign rules a people. W

the Collect for God's people. Who is their
gn?

Ans. God is the Sovereign of His people.

W. Yes; how do we acknowledge this in the
?

Ans. In asking to be governed.

W. How is this an acknowledgment that God
Sovereign?

Ans. Because it is a sovereign who governs
ple.

W. Have we been admitted into the number
s people?

Ans. Yes, at our Baptism.

W. Are we in this Collect praying for our-

Ans. Yes, unless we have forsaken the service

W. What do we say every time we chant the
'salm?

Ans. 'We are His *people*, and the sheep of
ture.'

W. Look what St. Peter says to the Chris-
whom he wrote; 1 St. Peter, ii. 9, 10.

Ans. 'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal
ood, an *holy nation, a peculiar people*;
n time past were not a people, but are now
ole of God.'

W. Yes. The Church, by teaching us to
r the people of God, teaches us to forget for
ourselves individually; to pray for ourselves
far as we are part of that great people, of
God is the Sovereign. And this Collect would
is to think of God as our—?
ereign,' said several.

W. And we as—what?

Ans. 'people,' again they answered.

W. How do we address God?

Ans. As '*Almighty God*.'

Miss W. Then if our Sovereign is Almighty God, our Sovereign is—what sort of a Sovereign?

Edward. An Almighty Sovereign.

Miss W. Yes, One who has power to govern His people as He will, and they cannot resist Him. How do we ask Him to look upon them?

All. ‘Mercifully.’

Miss W. And how do we ask that they may be governed?

Charley. By His great goodness.

Miss W. Or, according to His goodness. What do we mean when we ask God to look mercifully upon them?

‘That He may have compassion upon them when He sees their necessities,’ said Francis.

Miss W. Yes, Francis, He can always see His people; but to-day we ask Him especially to turn and look upon them in mercy; and then, that by His great goodness they may be—?

‘Governed and preserved evermore both in body and soul,’ continued Edgar.

Miss W. Well, boys, as this Collect does not need much explanation, we will turn our attention to God, as a King, governing all things. What does to govern mean?

Edward. To rule or direct.

Miss W. And what does God govern?

Charley. Every thing.

Miss W. Can you remember any verses from the Psalms which speak of God as a King?

George. ‘For God is my *King* of old.’ (Ps. lxxiv. 13.)

Miss W. Yes, George, turn to that Psalm, and read some of the following verses, which speak of God’s kingly acts.

George. ‘The help that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself. Thou didst divide the sea through Thy power, Thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou smotest the heads of Levia-

than in pieces, and gavest him to be meat for the people in the wilderness. Thou broughtest out fountains and waters out of the hard rocks: Thou driedst up mighty waters. The day is Thine, and the night is Thine: Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.'

Miss W. That will do. To what people did God give meat and drink in the wilderness?

Several. To the children of Israel.

Miss W. Yes, God was their King in a special manner, until they chose an earthly king. Then what did God say that they had done?

Alfred. That they had rejected Him from being their king. (1 Sam. viii. 7.)

Miss W. He was no longer their king in the especial way He had been before, though He still continued to rule them. Now give me some verses from the Psalms, there are a great many.

Edward. 'For the Lord is our defence: the Holy One of Israel is our *King*.' (Ps. lxxxix. 19.)

Francis. 'The Lord is *King*, and hath put on glorious apparel.' (Ps. xciii. 1.)

David. 'The Lord is *King*, be the people never so impatient; He sitteth between the Cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.' (Ps. xcix. 1.)

Alfred. 'The Lord sitteth above the water-flood, and the Lord remaineth a *King* for ever.' (Ps. xxix. 9.)

Miss W. Before you give me any more texts, let us see how God is represented in these verses performing the different offices of a King. In the verse you quoted, Edward, God is represented as a King doing what, for His people?

Edward. Defending them.

Miss W. Did God defend His ancient people?

Several. Yes, first from Pharaoh, and then from many enemies.

Miss W. In like manner He is still the defence of His people, guarding them from all their enemies.

And how is God represented as a King in the verse you gave me, Francis?

Francis. As a King clothed in Glory.

Miss W. Yes; and where did you, David, say God sitteth?

David. Above the Cherubims.

Miss W. Our King is, then, a glorious King, clothed with majesty and honour. His throne—where?

Charley. In heaven.

Miss W. In heaven, far above, out of our sight; and from His throne in glory He governs His people. David, what else did your verse say about God being a King?

David. ‘The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient.’

Miss W. Is God the King only of good people, or of the wicked also?

Andrew. He is King over the wicked too.

Miss W. Yes; and though they are impatient under His government, still He remains their King. ‘The fierceness of man shall turn to Thy praise, and the fierceness of them shalt Thou refrain.’ (Ps. lxxvi. 10.) How does a Sovereign deal with the disobedient part of His people?

Several. Punishes them.

Miss W. And what will God do to the wicked and disobedient?

Charley. He will punish them when they die.

‘Upon the ungodly He shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, storm and tempest: this shall be their portion to drink,’ said George. (Ps. xi. 7.)

Miss W. Yes, He will punish them then, but now does He never punish us for our sins?

Edward. Yes, when He sends sickness or famine into a country.

Miss W. That is right. He as a King can punish and will punish the wicked, and sometimes He punishes in love, sometimes in anger. Alfred, how is God represented in the verse you quoted?

Alfred. As a King remaining for ever, and sitting above the water-floods.

Miss W. Does an earthly king remain for ever?

Edward. No, when a king dies he returns to dust, like any other man.

Miss W. Yes, in the grave all are alike, the king and the beggar; but our King has been a King from everlasting, and will be a King to everlasting, and has power over all things. Can you now give me any texts which speak of God governing all things?

George 'He ruleth with His power for ever; His eyes behold the people: and such as will not believe shall not be able to exalt themselves.' (Ps. lxvi. 6.)

Miss W. That is a very good quotation. God rules or governs, and none can stand up against Him. Look now at Ps. lxxv. the sixth and following verses.

Andrew. 'Who in His strength setteth fast the mountains, and is girded about with power. Who stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of His waves, and the madness of the people. . . Thou that makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise Thee. Thou visitest the earth and blessest it, Thou makest it very plenteous. . . Thou preparest their corn, for so Thou providest for the earth. Thou waterest her furrows, Thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof: Thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it. Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness, and Thy clouds drop fatness.'

Miss W. That will do. These verses will help us to take some particular instance of God's governing power. What were we speaking of this morning, Alfred?

Alfred. The wind.

Miss W. And who makes the wind to blow?

All. Almighty God.

Miss W. And when the wind blows, what does the sea do?

Francis. It rages.

Miss W. Do you remember an account in the Bible of a great storm when a ship was lost?

Several. Yes, when St. Paul was going to Rome.

Miss W. That is right. Now let us trace God's governing power in that storm. Did He send the storm?

All. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. Were the people on the ship able to abate the wind?

Charley. Oh, no, they could not stop the wind blowing.

Miss W. No, they could not help themselves. For how many days were they tossed about?

Fred. Fourteen days.

Miss W. Did they think they could be saved?

George. No, they were all afraid.

Miss W. Read the 20th verse of the twenty-seventh chapter of Acts.

James. 'And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.'

Miss W. But who all this time was sitting above the water-floods, ruling the winds with His power?

Several. Almighty God.

'He sent an angel to tell St. Paul that they should be saved,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes; but what I want you to see is, how God was working His own will by this storm—that He had His own purposes to fulfil in sending it. Were any lives lost?

'No, they all got safe to land, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship,' said Fred.

Miss W. And had God any work to be done on the island where they were cast?

'Oh, yes,' said Alfred, 'I see now what you mean. God sent St. Paul there to heal the sick people, and He made the storm to blow for that reason.'

Miss W. Just so; God's healing power was thus made known in this barbarous island: but not only

so—the centurion and soldiers, could *they* learn nothing from all they saw?

Edward. They would learn that the God St. Paul worshipped was the true God.

Miss W. Yes, they might have learned this; we are not told whether any did believe, but we may with reason suppose that some would be convinced, and we find that the centurion had a special love for St. Paul. Do you remember how he showed it?

Several. He would not let the soldiers kill the prisoners, because he wished to save St. Paul.

Miss W. It *may* be that he was converted to Christianity by all he saw, though we are not told so; but we are told enough to see that God ruled the wind and the sea, and made all turn out to His glory. And now tell me what we daily see of God's governing power?

'Day and night coming, rain and fine weather,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, and the different seasons. What are they?

David. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

Miss W. Could we do without these different seasons?

'No,' said Alfred, 'things would not grow without them.'

Miss W. In winter the earth rests, in spring God makes the trees and flowers to shoot forth again, and what does the summer sun do?

Several. It ripens the fruit and corn.

Miss W. Yes, and then comes autumn, when we gather in the fruits of the earth, and all is again prepared for rest. And it is God, boys, who orders and governs all these things as He sees best. Ought we, then, to complain, when the weather is not just what we like?

Charley. No, I suppose we don't know what is best; we ought to trust in God, and not complain.

Miss W. This is, indeed, what we ought to do, Charley, and we may also *pray* to Him to order what is best for us, as we do in to-day's Collect. How do we ask to be governed?

Francis. By God's great goodness.

Miss W. When God destroyed the world with a flood, how was He then governing it?

Alfred. He was angry then.

Miss W. Yes, He governed in anger, but at that very time what did He do for His own people?

Edward. He provided a place of safety in the ark for them.

Miss W. He governed them in goodness and mercy, while He punished the disobedient and wicked. Who do we pray may be governed, in the Collect?

Several. God's people.

Miss W. And we pray that they may be governed both in—?

'Body and soul,' said several.

Miss W. God not only governs nature, the winds, and the sea, day and night, but He also governs the bodies and souls of men, and they cannot resist Him; but what we pray is that He will govern His people according to His—?

'Goodness,' said Alfred.

Miss W. If we are really God's people we shall wish to be governed by Him. Is it a trouble to faithful people to obey their sovereign?

'No,' said Francis, 'they think it an honour.'

Miss W. Yes, so shall we feel with regard to God's government. We should wish, and try always to give up our wills to Him, not try and govern ourselves, but willingly submit to Him; so He govern and preserve us evermore both in body and soul, and always appoint what is best for us. we always know for ourselves what is best for

Edward. No, Joseph did not know that it was best for him to be sold into Egypt.

Miss W. Exactly so ; and often and often it is the same with ourselves, boys ; what we think a great trouble may be really a great blessing, and we may learn from what we have said to-day, to trust in God's governing mercy. You must try to leave your concerns in His hands, and then you may be quite sure He will govern you in His goodness, and order what is best both for your bodies and souls. Do you remember, Charley, last hay-making, how anxious you were to ride home on the cart of hay, from Farmer Brown's field ?

'Oh, yes, I remember,' he replied, 'I had just run to look at a hare that had crossed the field, when the cart started, and in a moment afterwards it was all upset.'

Miss W. And if you had been on the top, what would have happened, Charley ?

'Oh ! I should have been very much hurt, if not killed,' he answered.

Miss W. And do you think that happened by chance ?

He looked very serious, and answered, 'No, it was God took care of me. I suppose that was the reason the hare ran across the field.'

Miss W. Perhaps God did use that means to save you. He often makes use of the smallest things : and, if not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge, we may believe that it was by His ordering that a little hare saved you from a dreadful accident.

'I did not think of it so at the time,' said Charley.

Miss W. Perhaps you did not. We often forget to trace God's wonderful governing hand, but that does not alter the fact that He is daily and hourly ordering the most trifling events for us ; governing and preserving us both in body and soul. I dare say, if you think, you can some of you remember other instances. Can you ?

'Oh, yes, I remember one,' said Francis. 'One

day when I was out with father, he had promised to take me out in a boat on the sea. He fixed with some men who were going out in the evening to take us, and then we set off with our baskets to sell what father had got. We went to a gentleman's house, and the servants took us into the kitchen, and then looked over every thing in the basket. I remember so well how vexed I felt, for I was sure we should be too late for the boat, and I reminded father over and over again, but he wouldn't hurry them. At last they got all they wanted, and though we walked as fast as we could back to the town, the boat had been gone about five minutes when we arrived."

'And you were very much disappointed, Francis were you?' asked Miss Walton.

'Oh, I cried *just about*,' he said, 'for we were going home in the morning; but afterwards I was so glad we had not gone, for the boat, and all the men in it, were lost.'

Miss W. That was, indeed, a wonderful instance of God's ordering events for your preservation. But it is not always, boys, that we can so plainly see why God appoints things as He does. Perhaps we shall see all plainly, if we are able to look back upon this world after death, but now we must often submit to His government without being able to see the reason of it.'

'As a little child submits to a parent, I suppose,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, Edward, a parent may forbid a child to eat poison, and a child may think it very hard not to be allowed to have what it wishes, but the parent knows best, and the child, though it cannot understand why, must submit. God governs with a Father's love, as well as with a Sovereign's authority, and we must all try to submit to Him as obedient children.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

The Sunday next before Easter.

COLLECT.

Almighty and everlasting God, who, of Thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility; Mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of His patience, and also be made partakers of His resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

‘FRED, do come here,’ cried Alfred, ‘and look what beautiful bunches of palm I have got!’

Fred was approaching the turn down to Henry Mason’s house when Alfred called him. The house stood in a yard, somewhat apart from the village, and a green lane led down to it, shut out from the road by a gate. Alfred was standing on the second bar of this gate, looking down the street, when he espied Fred, and called him, although he was yet at a considerable distance from the end of the lane. Alfred, in the meantime, jumped down, and opened the gate as Fred came up, swinging it back as far as it would go, then made a profound bow, and begged Fred to enter.

‘Do you think I’ve grown so big I can’t get in without all that room?’ asked Fred, laughing.

‘No, no,’ replied Alfred, ‘I only wanted a ride back,’ and jumping upon the gate, he let it swing to

again with no little violence, and in an instant afterwards was at Fred's side, saying, 'Haven't I got some *just about* beautiful palm? I am going to take a bunch up to Miss Walton before school; will you come?'

'Yes, I'll go with you,' replied Fred; 'but it's time we started now, I suspect. I heard the half-hour strike just as I came out of the house.'

'Stay there while I run and fetch it, then,' said Alfred, and he darted into the house, leaving Fred standing just inside the yard; but in a moment he returned again with some choice bunches of palm. The lower flowers were burst quite out, while the upper ones were still wrapped in their soft downy covering. 'There's a bit for you,' he said, as he handed a pretty branch to Fred, at the same time sticking another into the button-hole of his own jacket. The two boys then arranged a few branches into a neat little bunch for Miss Walton, and another for her brother, and started with their simple gifts up to Mr Walton's house. All the children they met carried this emblem of the day, but none had such fine bunches as Alfred and Fred, for Alfred always knew where to find the choicest palm, or the earliest primrose, or the sweetest violets of the year; and now, as he walked along, he felt almost proud of his adornments. On his way, he met his brother Ned coming from the town.

'I say, Alfred, you must give me some of that palm,' he cried out, as he came up to him; 'I haven't got a bit, and I must have some.'

'Oh, indeed, Ned, I can't,' he replied.

'And pray, why can't you?' returned Ned, 'there you have got some in your jacket, and a bunch in each hand, and then you tell me you can't. I tell you,' he said, roughly, 'I must have one of those bunches.'

Alfred held them very tight, while he replied, 'You

may have the piece in my jacket, but I can't give you either of these bunches. I want them for somebody else.'

'Somebody else! some of your favourite maidens, I suppose,' returned Ned. 'Come, you may as well give me a bunch, or I shall take it from you.'

'I don't want them for any of the maidens,' replied Alfred again, 'I want them for Mr and Miss Walton; so you see you can't have them,' and as he said this, he seemed to think that Ned would not ask again; yet still he held the bunches very tightly in his grasp, starting to go on his way as he finished speaking.

'I don't care who they are for,' replied Ned, 'I intend to have one;' at the same moment catching hold of poor little Alfred, and with one of his powerful arms pinioning Alfred's arms to his side, he deliberately picked out the choicest bunch, in spite of Alfred's earnest entreaties, and then holding it out of reach, said, 'Now you may go and get another bunch for Miss Walton.'

But though it was out of Alfred's reach, it was not quite out of Fred's, who instantly and unexpectedly made a spring at it; but instead of being able to snatch it out of Ned's hand, as he had hoped, he only succeeded in hitting it down to the ground. Alfred saw it fall, and darted towards it, thinking again to get possession of it, but alas! it was not to be: Ned gave him a push which threw him on the ground, and then picked up the fallen bunch, before either of the boys could manage to regain possession of it, and started off quickly with his stolen treasure.

'I'll tell you what,' cried Fred, 'we'll not stand his. Come, Alfred, we can fight him together.'

'No,' returned Alfred, looking very dismal at the loss of one bunch, and at the sight of the other considerably injured by his fall. 'I'm not going to fight; Miss Walton would rather go without the balm than have us fight for it, I'm sure.'

along, Fred; Miss Watson must have broken bunch.' He tried to say this cheer- it was very hard work; he could have cried only he thought that would be babyish, and to bear the disappointment as patiently as and, by adding his own and Fred's branch, bunch look more respectable; for Fred and his branch go too.

'Why wouldn't you fight about it, Alfred Fred, when they had gone a little way.

'Why, Fred, I couldn't fight about it to replied.

'What do you mean, Alfred?' asked Fred. 'You used to be ready enough to fight couldn't you fight to-day?'

'Why, Fred,' he answered, 'I had just been singing at the Collect for to-day, before you and, don't you remember, we pray that we follow the example of Christ's patience; and been thinking how patient He was. How then, go and begin to fight directly?'

Fred did not answer just at first, and Alfred continued: 'Don't you remember how the .

By this time the two boys had reached Mr Walton's house ; but just as they were going to knock at the door, they espied Miss Walton and her brother coming towards them along one of the garden paths. Alfred immediately ran up to them, and touching his hat, said, 'Please, ma'am, we've brought you some palm.'

'Thank you, Alfred. What a pretty bunch !' replied Miss Walton. 'Where did you get it ? I have not seen any before so much out.'

'Please, ma'am, I got it in Hollow Ground,' he answered.

'And have you got none for me, Alfred ?' asked Mr Walton, in a tone of pretended disappointment.

'Please, sir,' began Alfred, 'I had a bunch for you, but—but,' and when he had got thus far, he stopped ; for he thought it would be telling tales to say more ; but the tears rose in his eyes, and he turned his head away.

'Why, my boy, what is the matter ?' said Mr Walton, laying his hand kindly on Alfred's shoulder. 'You need not fret about it, I was only joking ; I suppose somebody begged it from you ?'

'No, sir, they didn't,' said Fred, coming to his friend's assistance ; 'his brother Ned stole it from him, and threw Alfred in the dirt, and broke the other bunch ever so much, although Alfred told him they were for you. Alfred wouldn't have given your bunch to any body.'

Mr Walton smiled at Fred's vehemence, and soon learned the whole history from him ; then turning to Alfred, he said, kindly, 'Your conduct has given me far more pleasure than the finest bunch of palm would have done ; so cheer up, my boy, and think no more about the lost bunch.'

Alfred looked up with his own sunny smile now brightening his face, and really felt far more happy than if he had had the most beautiful palm to give

to Mr Walton, he glanced at Miss Walton, and saw that she too was pleased, and then he felt his happiness complete. It was not often that Mr Walton praised the boys for their conduct, so that when he *did*, they valued it doubly. Fred, too, was happy, for he was glad to hear Alfred commended.

‘Walk along with us, boys, and tell me why you carry palm to-day?’ said Mr Walton.

‘Please, sir, it is because Christ rode into Jerusalem to-day, and the people spread palms in His way, is it not?’ asked Fred.

‘Yes,’ Mr Walton replied, ‘but not the plant which you call palm. The real palm is a very beautiful tree. It is generally thought that our Saviour made this triumphant entry into Jerusalem only six days before His crucifixion. What did He ride upon?’

‘A young ass,’ answered both the boys.

Mr Walton. Do you think that was any very great honour?

‘People wouldn’t think it was now,’ replied Fred.

Mr Walton. Indeed, they would not. Yet it was the most triumphal entry our blessed Saviour ever made into Jerusalem. Do you remember what had been prophesied about it?

Alfred. ‘Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.’ (St. Matthew, xxi. 5. See also Zech. ix. 9.)

‘In this His hour of greatest earthly triumph,’ continued Mr Walton, ‘He showed most wonderfully His meekness and humility, for He chose to ride on the animal despised by the world, with no other pomp than the garments and branches of palm spread in the way; and with no other heralds than the voices of the multitude, and the children crying—what, boys?’

‘“Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He

that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest," ' Fred repeated. (St. Matt., xxi. 9.)

'If you would be like Him, boys,' Mr Walton continued, 'you, too, must learn to be meek and lowly of heart, patient and humble. And it was because you were patient and humble when you were much provoked, that you pleased me, my boy,' he said, speaking to Alfred. 'Both of you must try, always, to have this spirit, and then you will be following the example of the patience and humility of our meek and lowly King.'

They reached the garden gate as Mr Walton finished speaking. 'It is time for me to go to the school now,' said Miss Walton, letting go her brother's arm. 'You may come with me, boys.'

'Thank you, ma'am,' they replied; and Fred held open the gate for Miss Walton to pass through, and then he ran after them, and joined in the conversation which Miss Walton kept up with the two boys as she walked along. Alfred was giving her a description of how he had watched the palm for many days, and how he feared that somebody else would have found it out before he got it, and how pleased he had been on the Saturday when he found it all safe. He was in full chatter when they reached the school-room door, but he was then obliged to stop, as it was just the hour to commence school.

'What week does this day begin?' asked Miss Walton.

All. Passion week.

Miss W. And why did you say it was called Passion week?

Edward. Because we commemorate our Saviour's sufferings and death.

Miss W. Can you tell me what else it is sometimes called?

Alfred. The holy week.

Miss W. It was thus called because men used to

give up all worldly employments, and to betake themselves to devotion all through this week. Even the courts were shut up, and prisoners who were confined for small offences were freed.*

‘Were not people much better then than they are now?’ asked Fred.

‘They set us a good example in such things as these,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘We may be quite sure it would be better for us, if we, like them, would sometimes give up worldly business and devote ourselves to prayer. We might be much holier and better than we are if we gave more time to religious duties.’

‘But, please, ma’am,’ said Charley, ‘we could not stop work, father would not let us.’

‘No, Charley, I don’t think boys like you can,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘You are under authority, and you must do as you are bid. But let us see, is there nothing that you *can* do? How many times will there be service in Church this week?’

Several. Every day; morning and evening.

Miss W. Your work is done by evening service; what, then, can you give up to come to Church?

‘We can give up our play,’ replied several.

Miss W. Yes, this I should like to see you all do. Many of you have been constantly at Church all through Lent, but others have chosen rather to play. Let not this be the case, boys, during this holy week, but give God some little of your play-hours. And those of you who can come to the morning service also, ought not to neglect it. The Church calls upon us all to meditate and pray; let us not disobey her call.

Miss Walton said this for the sake of one or two of the boys who were not as careful and regular at the services in Church as they might have been. Samuel and Edgar would often play in the street,

* See Bishop Sparrow’s *Rationale upon the Prayer-Book*.

while others were worshipping in God's holy house, and as Miss Walton spoke, they looked ashamed. Others again had never missed a service during the whole of Lent. Alfred and Francis, and George and Andrew, might evening by evening be seen in their places; Edward and Charley, and others, were not often absent; and when they were, it was unavoidable. Often and often would Edward and Charley hurry home from their work, and then, hastily washing themselves, and taking a piece of bread in their hands to eat as they went along, would start off to Church. And sometimes, not having time for even this, they would come straight from their work to the house of God. But we must now return to their lesson.

'What,' Miss Walton asked, 'do we pray for to-day?'

Francis. 'That we may follow the example of Christ's patience, and also be partakers of His resurrection.'

Miss W. When did He set us the most wonderful example of patience?

Charley. All through His Passion until His Death.

Miss W. Yes; and His Passion and Death the Church brings before us this week. She shows us *how* He suffered, and *how patiently* He suffered; that we may do—what?

All. Follow His example.

Miss W. Yes; but can we do this in our own strength?

Alfred. No, God must help us.

Miss W. That is right; therefore we pray, before we begin our meditations, that we may profit by them by following the example we are studying. We will now go to the beginning of the Collect, and follow the thoughts suggested in what we call the introduction.

‘Please, ma’am, the introduction is longer than the prayer to-day,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, it is; how far does it extend?

Several. Down to the word ‘humility.’

Miss W. After that, what comes?

George. The petition.

Miss W. To which person in the Holy Trinity is this Collect addressed?

Fred. To God the Father.

Miss W. Why do you say this?

Edward. Because it was the Father who sent the Son.

Miss W. What do we say He sent Him for?

Andrew. ‘To take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility.’

Miss W. Yes; but why did God think of man at all?

Several. Because He loved us.

Miss W. We say God sent His Son of His—what?

Andrew. ‘Tender love towards mankind.’

Miss W. Was man worthy of God’s love?

Edward. No, he had sinned against God, and disobeyed His commands.

Miss W. Yes; and yet God loved us, and pitied us. Do you remember any verses which speak of the love of God to man?

David. ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ (St. John, iii. 16.)

George. ‘In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.’ (1 John, iv. 9.)

Miss W. Yes, both of those verses speak of God’s love, and of the wondrous way in which He showed

t. Look now at Romans, v. 8.

Samuel. 'But God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'

Miss W. If we consider, for a moment, the state of man after the fall, we shall see more plainly how wonderful was God's love towards him. What did Adam's disobedience bring into the world?

Several. Sin and death.

Miss W. Only the death of the body?

Francis. No, the death of the soul also.

Miss W. And after sin was brought into the world, were men born good or evil?

Charley. Evil; 'born in sin.'

Miss W. Then, supposing any man could have lived without committing actual sin from his birth, would he have been fit to go to heaven?

'No, because his nature was sinful,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, sin had so corrupted man's nature, that he could not fit himself for God and heaven. In this state of misery, did God cease to love him?

Charley. No, He loved him still, and sent His Son to die for us.

Miss W. Though we were disobedient, sinful creatures, yet God loved us; and because we could do nothing for ourselves, He sent His Son to take upon Him—what?

Several. 'Our flesh.'

Miss W. But did He take its sin also?

Edward. No; 'in Him was no sin.'

Miss W. That is right. What is the punishment of sin?

Fred. Death.

Miss W. But our Saviour had no sin. Did He deserve to die?

Alfred. No; He did not die for His own sins, but for ours.

Miss W. Yet He died in what flesh?

Andrew. In our flesh.

Miss W. What does the epistle say about this?

Samuel. 'But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the *likeness of man*; and being found in *fashion as a man*, He humbled Himself, and became *obedient unto death*, even the death of the cross.'

Miss W. Can you remember any other passages which speak of Christ's suffering in our flesh?

George. 'Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, *He also Himself likewise took part of the same*; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.' (Heb. ii. 14.)

Miss W. He suffered in our flesh, because it was our flesh that was sinful; He, though sinless, suffered the punishment of sinful flesh by doing—what, for us?

'By dying for us,' replied several.

Miss W. We now see why Christ's taking our flesh, and His suffering death, are mentioned together in the Collect. Where was He before He was born into this world?

James. In heaven.

Miss W. Was He man then?

Francis. No; He was God, but not man.

Miss W. And could He have suffered death as God only?

Edward. No, God cannot die.

Miss W. And, therefore, what was done for us?

Alfred. God sent His Son to take upon Him *our flesh*.

Miss W. God the Word, who, St. John says, was in the beginning with God, and *was God*—God the Word was made— Can you not say that text?

George. 'The Word was made *flesh*, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory (the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and *th.*' (St. John, i. 14.)

Miss W. Then, being made flesh, what could He do?

Charley. He could die for us.

Miss W. Yes, since the Word could not die in His own original Nature, He took our flesh, that in it He might taste death for all men. Read Heb. ii. 9.

Edgar. 'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honour; that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.'

Miss W. And what did God the Father manifest by thus sending His Son?

Charley. 'His tender love towards mankind.'

Miss W. Indeed He did. 'He commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' What death did He die?

All. 'The death of the Cross.'

Miss W. This most painful of all deaths did the only and well-beloved Son of God suffer for us sinners. Did we love Him, to induce Him to do this for us?

Edward. No, 'we love Him because He *first* loved us.' (1 John, iv. 19.)

George. 'Herein is love, *not that we loved God*, but that *He loved us*, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' (1 John, iv. 10.)

Miss W. Yes, truly. He loved us before we loved Him, and He manifested His love by sending His Son. And the Son showed *His* love by offering Himself. But there are two things connected with our Saviour's Passion, especially mentioned in the Collect; what are they?

Edward. His humility and patience.

Miss W. That is right. Becoming man in itself as a wonderful act of humility; but what other act of humility does the epistle mention?

Andrew. 'He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross*.'

Miss W. We have not time to-day to trace the exceeding humility of the Son of God, for we must go on to the petition in the Collect. What do we especially pray that we may follow?

All. 'The example of His patience.'

Miss W. Can any of you tell me what patience is?

'Not to be angry when things are vexing,' said Charley.

'Not to complain when we are suffering,' said Edward.

'To wait for anything for a long time without being vexed,' said Francis.

Miss Walton smiled at the different explanations, and said, 'You have all explained patience by giving examples of it, which is perhaps the best way. I will give you another: To bear neglect, or insult, or false accusation, without reproach or anger. But, perhaps, *endurance* is the only one word which at all expresses patience. Let us now see how our blessed Saviour was an example of patience. Edward, how did you explain patience?

'Not to complain under sufferings,' he replied.

Miss W. Was our Saviour an example of this kind of patience?

Alfred. Oh! yes; He did not complain all the time He was on the Cross.

Miss W. Had his sufferings begun before?

Fred. Yes, when He was scourged, and the crown of thorns was put upon His head.

Miss W. In any other way?

Charley. Yes; by having to bear the heavy cross.

'Which,' Miss Walton continued, 'it is said, was too heavy for Him, and He sank under its weight. Through all this suffering, did He complain?'

Alfred. No, He bore all patiently.

Miss W. And when He came to Mount Calvary, and the nails were driven through His sacred hands

and feet, and He was raised on the Cross, and hung there for many long hours, was He patient?

Charley. Yes; He did not utter a word of complaint.

Miss W. What did the prophet Isaiah say of His patience under sufferings?

George. 'He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.' (Isaiah, liii. 7.)

Miss W. He opened not His mouth in words of anger, or in words of complaint under the most severe sufferings; therefore, of what is He an example to us?

Several. Patience under suffering.

Miss W. How can you, boys, follow His example?

Andrew. By being patient when we are sick.

'By not complaining and fretting,' continued Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, by bearing any suffering, whatever it may be, without complaining. And now tell me what *I* gave as an example of patience?

Edward. Bearing false accusation, neglect, or insult, without reproach or anger.

Miss W. Was our blessed Saviour falsely accused, neglected, and insulted?

George. 'He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.' (Is. liii. 3.)

Miss W. When did the Jews first begin to despise and reject Him?

Edward. From His very birth. 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.' (St. John, i. 11.)

Miss W. Yes, and all through His life how did the Scribes and Pharisees treat Him?

Samuel. They despised and insulted Him.

Miss W. And when the hour of death came—?

‘Then they mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a purple robe,’ said little James.

‘They pretended to worship Him, and they struck Him, and crowned Him in mockery,’ said David.

Miss W. Yes, and all this they did to insult Him, and show how much they despised Him. Did they continue to do the same when He was actually on the cross?

Edward. Yes, they still mocked Him, and said, ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save; if He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross.’ (St. Matt. xxvii. 42.)

Miss W. And how did He bear all this scornful jeering?

Charley. Patiently. ‘He answered not a word.’

Miss W. Neither did He *feel* angry; for what did He do for those very men who were thus insulting Him?

George. He prayed for them: ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ (St. Luke, xxiii. 34.)

Miss W. That is right. Again, then, He is an example to us of—what?

Edward. Patience under scorn and insult.

Miss W. And was He falsely accused?

Alfred. Yes; they brought false witness against Him, but He answered not a word.

Miss W. And what do we pray in the Collect?

Several. ‘That we may follow the example of His patience.’

Miss W. How, then, are you to follow His example in this particular? Are you ever insulted, or jeered at, or ill-treated?

‘Yes, ma’am, that we are,’ said Samuel. ‘I’m sure it was only this morning that Ned Mason behaved shamefully to Alfred. I only wish I’d come up a little sooner.’

Miss W. What would you have done, Sam?

‘Why,’ he answered, his anger rising as he spoke, ‘I wouldn’t have stood by quietly, and seen a little boy bullied.’

Miss W. Well, Sam, I won’t say it would have been wrong for you to have defended a little boy; but supposing you had been in Alfred’s place, and the palm had been violently taken from you—what would you have done?

‘Please, ma’am, I wouldn’t have let him take it from me; no, that I wouldn’t. I would have fought till now, before I would have let him treat me in that way.’

‘What do you say, boys?’ asked Miss Walton, speaking to the rest of the class.

Some agreed with Samuel. Fred and Alfred said nothing, but Charley, in a low whisper, said, ‘We had better take it patiently.’

Miss W. Charley is right, boys. You had better bear the insult patiently. How could you do this?

Fred. By not fighting about it, or saying angry words.

Miss W. Is there nothing else besides not speaking or acting impatiently?

Alfred whispered, ‘We should not feel angry with the person who ill-treated us.’

Miss W. And if you thus bear ill-treatment without angry words, or revengeful feelings, whose example are you following?

Several. The example of Christ, ‘Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not.’ (1 Peter, ii. 23.)

Miss W. Now, perhaps, this is one of the most difficult of duties, for boys like you, because you fancy it is mean and cowardly to bear insult unrevenged; but, indeed, boys, it requires far more courage to take insult patiently than it does to return it.

‘But, please, ma’am, we don’t like to be called

cowards, as we should be, if we stood to be bullied—
said Francis.

Miss W. Perhaps you don't; but you must bear it patiently, as your blessed Saviour bore to be called a deceiver, and to be told that He had a devil. If you do right, you must not mind what man says. You will be judged by God, not by man. But tell me honestly, which requires the most courage, to fight, or to bear scorn and ridicule?

'I am sure it is very hard to bear ridicule,' said Francis.

'It does not require much courage to fight a boy like ourselves, certainly,' said Edward.

Miss W. Then it seems, after all, the real coward is the boy who fights, for he is *afraid* of ridicule, and the brave boy is the one who fears not ridicule, but who yet will not fight; not because he is fearful, but because it is wrong to fight. Is it not so, boys?

'I suppose it is,' said Edward.

Miss W. Yes, it requires a great deal of courage not to answer when you are reviled, to make up your mind to bear ridicule, and to be called a coward. This *does* require courage, and such courage, boys, you must strive for and pray for. Let us now take one more instance of a way in which you may follow your Saviour's example. Do you remember that day when you were all of you accused of making a noise on Sunday evening?

'Yes, I remember,' replied Francis. 'I was not even out of the house, and old widow Trench declared I had been one of the worst.'

'And I,' said Edward, 'had never moved from where I was standing, or spoken a word.'

'And I,' . . . began David.

'Well, never mind the particulars now. What I want you to remember is, how you felt and spoke when you were falsely accused,' said Miss Walton.

They did not, however, speak now; they were not

so ready to recall their after conduct. At last Francis said, 'I know I was *just about* angry.'

Miss W. You were all more or less angry, and some of you said very naughty things of widow Trench. Now think, boys, was your conduct right?

'She had no business to say what was not true,' said David.

'Had the Jews any business to bear false witness against Jesus? Did *He* deserve to be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon?' asked Miss Walton, gravely.

'No, ma'am,' they answered.

Miss W. No, truly; and yet how did He bear it?

George. Without anger, without revenge.

Miss W. How then, boys, should you have borne to be falsely accused?

'Patiently,' Andrew now answered, and several others.

Miss W. Indeed you ought. And remember you never can be as falsely accused as was our blessed Saviour. For instance, do you never make a noise in the street when you ought not?

'I suppose we do,' replied Francis.

Miss W. Then, although you did not deserve blame at that time, you do at others. But how was it with our blessed Saviour?

Charley. He had never done any thing wrong.

Miss W. Just so. You cannot, therefore, be unjustly blamed to the same extent as He was who had no sin. And remember again: *you* are blamed by your betters and elders. Was it so with Him?

Edward. No, He was far above all those who falsely accused Him, for He was their God.

Miss W. Yes, *He* bore false accusation, ill treatment, and insult, patiently; but you— Indeed, boys, we all ought to be ashamed of ourselves for our anger and impatience, and try more closely to follow His holy example. And during this coming week,

when we read of His awful sufferings, and wondrous patience, and deep humility, we should *try*, as well as pray, to follow His example. I am sure, if you are on the watch, boys, you cannot pass a day without finding some opportunity when you may be patient, as He was, either by suffering pain, or hunger, or thirst, without complaint; or bearing unkindness or false accusation without anger or reproach; or by patient waiting, which was what Francis gave as an example of patience. Whose example must be your guide?

All. The example of our Saviour.

Miss W. Yes, if you take Him for your pattern, you will learn patiently to bear the ridicule of the world, and will be hereafter partakers of His glorious resurrection. But we have not time now to say any thing on this part of the Collect. I have only a few minutes to fix about the lessons of the week. Do you think you will all be able to get to evening Church?

‘We shall try,’ they replied.

Miss W. Very well. Then on Wednesday and Thursday I will give you a lesson, if you will come up after Church. How many Collects are there for Good Friday?

All. Three.

Miss W. The first is perhaps the best to be left for that day; on the other two Collects, therefore, I will catechise you on Wednesday and Thursday evenings; and on Saturday I will also give you a lesson upon the Collect for that day.

‘Thank you, ma’am,’ said several. ‘Please, ma’am, are we to learn them for you?’

‘Yes,’ Miss Walton replied. ‘Learn the second Collect for Good Friday, on Wednesday, and the third on Thursday.’

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

First Catechising for Good Friday.

SECOND COLLECT.

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy Holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

TRUE to their promise, none of the first-class boys were absent from Church during the evenings of the Holy Week. Even Samuel and Edgar were contented to give up their play for a little while, that they might worship God; and many grown-up people willingly shortened their hours of labour that they might devote some extra time to penitence and prayer; so that evening by evening the beautiful little Church of Forley was nearly full of worshippers, and thus, in their measure, the children and people of Forley *did* follow the good example of the holy men of old, of whom Miss Walton had told her boys on the Sunday before. There was one thing which the children did not like. During Passion Week there was no singing in the Church, and to them it seemed scarcely like going to Church without it, and yet it helped them to remember that a penitent, sorrowful spirit, was the one most suited for that holy season. It helped them to remember that their own sins had caused their Saviour's sufferings, and that now they must confess and mourn over

them, if so be they might be better fitted to rejoice when the morning of joyful Easter dawned upon them; and therefore, as Charley said to Miss Walton, 'It was better for them to have no singing, because it helped them to be serious and thoughtful, but they should be glad when Easter came, and they might sing again.' But it was not only in Church that some of the boys tried to keep in mind that Passion Week was not a time for joy and mirth: during their working hours, and hours of amusement, they tried to keep guard over their spirits, and to tame them down to serious thought.

The service being over on Wednesday evening, the children, as usual, waited until the rest of the congregation had left the Church, and then quietly followed, until they were outside the Church-yard gate; but then, instead of beginning to chat and run about, as was their wont, a little band continued grave and thoughtful; they remembered the solemn words they had just been listening to, the awful thoughts that had filled their minds, and they could not forget it instantly in idle play.

'Does not every thing seem to you different, Charley?' said Alfred, as they walked along together. 'All this week I have felt so strange, as though something dreadful had happened.'

'Yes,' returned Charley, 'so have I; when I am alone at my work I can't help thinking of all Christ suffered for us, and it seems unkind, like, to play; just as if somebody we loved was ill or dying.'

'That's exactly what I have felt,' replied Alfred again. 'Mr Walton's sermons have been so grave and so plain, that I almost feel as if it had all just happened, and I can't bear to play and laugh as usual.'

'Was not it very awful when Mr Walton said to-night that each wrong thing we did had added to Christ's sufferings; that if we had not done wrong, perhaps He would not have had to bear so much?'

It made me think I was as wicked as the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross.'

'Don't you remember what Miss Walton once said to us?' replied Alfred; 'that the nails did not keep Christ on the cross, but that our sins *put* Him there, and that His love to us *kept* Him there. I remember so well, for I thought then how very wicked it was to be naughty, and that I wouldn't be naughty any more. It all came back to me when Mr Walton said that to-night; and how many naughty things I have done since, though I thought I would be good.'

'Mr and Miss Walton are always saying the same things,' replied Charley. 'Mr Walton often uses the same words in his sermon that Miss Walton has said to us at the lesson. I often wonder how it is.'

'I often wonder too,' returned Alfred; 'but I suppose all good people think alike, and if any body else taught us, it would be the same.'

With this idea the boys were obliged to be satisfied, though Charley declared *he* did not think that was the reason; he thought each must know what the other was going to say. They had, however, no more time to talk about it now, for they had reached Mr Walton's house, and were soon seated in the parlour, waiting for Miss Walton to come and give them their promised lesson. She did not keep them waiting long, and said, when she came into the room, how pleased she was to see them all there, and to find them quiet and silent: She took her seat, and at once began to hear them say the second Collect for Good Friday.

'What is the Church called in this Collect?' asked Miss Walton.

Edward. A Body.

Miss W. Do we speak of part of the Church or the whole?

Several. The whole.

Miss W. Yes, we speak of the whole Body of the Church. What is the whole Church called in the Creed?

All. The Catholic Church.

Miss W. What does 'Catholic' mean?

Francis. Universal, or all over the world.

Miss W. The Church, then, is not composed of only one nation, is it?

George. No; it is made up of many nations.

Miss W. Look at Gal. iii. 28.

Fred. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all *one* in Christ Jesus.'

Miss W. Now look at 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Andrew. 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into *one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free.'

Miss W. And do you remember how the speech of Caiaphas is explained by St. John? Caiaphas said it was expedient that Jesus should die, and St. John says, 'This spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;—?'

'And not for that nation only,' continued George, 'but that also He should gather together in *one*, the children of God that were scattered abroad.' (St. John, xi. 51-52.)

Miss W. Into what, then, have they been gathered?

Several. Into one Body, the Church.

Miss W. And who is the Head of this great Body gathered out of all the world?

Andrew. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. But is the whole of the Body on earth?

Alfred. No, part of it is with Christ.

Miss W. Yes, all good people who are dead form the Church in Paradise. Are there, then, two Bodies?

Edward. No, the Church on earth, and the Church above, are one.

Miss W. The Church on earth we call the Church militant. What does militant mean?

Francis. Fighting.

Miss W. Yes, but the portion of the Church which is above is at rest. Was it always at rest?

Charley. No, it was once fighting too.

Miss W. And when will the whole Church have ceased fighting?

Fred. At the end of the world.

Miss W. Yes, then it will have fought and conquered, and will be the Church militant no longer, but the Church triumphant, or in triumph. But now to return to the Collect. How is the whole Body of the Church governed?

Several. By the Spirit of God.

Miss W. Christ is the Head, and the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church to govern and preserve her. Do you remember how in the Acts of the Apostles all the working of the Church is referred to the Spirit? Look at Acts, xiii. 2 and 4.

Samuel. 'As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the *Holy Ghost* said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them. . . . So they, being sent forth by the *Holy Ghost*, departed unto Seleucia.'

Miss W. Can you remember any other similar texts?

George. 'For it seemed good to the *Holy Ghost*, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden.' (Acts, xv. 28.)

Edward. 'While Peter thought on the vision, the *Spirit* said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.' (Chap. x. 19.)

Miss W. That will do. In the early times of the Church, the Holy Spirit in this direct manner governed the Church, but He also governed indirectly by teaching the hearts of her rulers. Look at Acts, iv. 8 and 31.

David. 'Then Peter, filled with the *Holy Ghost*, said... And they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost*, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.'

Miss W. Look again at chap. xiii. 9.

James. 'Then Saul (who is also called Paul), *filled with the Holy Ghost*, set his eyes on him.'

Miss W. Very well; if these men, thus filled with the Holy Ghost, governed the Church outwardly, by whom was it really governed?

Several. By the Spirit.

Miss W. And how does that same Spirit now govern the Church?

Alfred. Through its ministers.

Miss W. You may look at your Prayer-Books, at the Ordination Service, both for Priests and Bishops, and see what is said about receiving the Holy Ghost.

They found the place, and Alfred read. 'Receive the *Holy Ghost* for the Office and Work of a Priest;' and again, 'Receive the *Holy Ghost* for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the *Holy Ghost*. Amen. And remember that thou stir up the *grace of God which is given thee* by this Imposition of our hands; for God hath not given us the *spirit* of fear, but of *power*, and *love*, and soberness.'

Miss W. And now look at the hymn that is said over them.

Charley. 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,' &c.

Miss W. We see, then, that there is a special gift of the Holy Ghost given to the ministers of the Church, and that through them the Holy Ghost does—what, boys?

'Governs the Church,' replied several.

Miss W. Not so openly and visibly as at the beginning, but, as we hope and believe, truly and sufficiently. How many orders are there in the ministry?

Several. Three; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

Miss W. Which is the highest order?

All. Bishops.

Miss W. Yes, they stand in the place of the Apostles, and receive their authority from them. But now we say, the Spirit not only governs, but what else?

Samuel. Sanctifies.

Miss W. What does sanctify mean?

Several. To make holy.

Miss W. Does the Catechism say that the Spirit sanctifies?

Edward. Yes; 'I learn to believe . . . in the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God.'

Miss W. That is right. Can you now remember any texts which teach us the same truth?

Alfred. 'And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the *Spirit* of our God.' (1 Cor., vi. 11.)

Miss W. Look also at 1 Peter, i. 2.

Samuel. 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through *sanctification* of the Spirit.'

Miss W. And now look why St. Paul says the Gentiles were acceptable to God. (Rom. xv. 16.)

Edgar. 'That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being *sanctified by the Holy Ghost*.'

Miss W. By whom, then, is the Church, as one great body, *governed and sanctified*?

'By the Holy Spirit,' they all answered.

Miss W. Yes; and being thus governed and sanctified, how does St. Paul say it will be presented to God? (Eph. v. 25-28.)

Francis. 'Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might *sanctify* and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that He

might present it to Himself a *glorious* Church; not having *spot*, or *wrinkle*, or *any such thing*, but that it should be *holy*, and without *blemish*.'

Miss W. Yes; when the warfare of the Church is over, and the time of her triumph and rest shall arrive, then will she be glorious and holy; for in the new Jerusalem 'there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.' (Rev. xxi. 27.) And, let us remember, that being made members of the Church militant, does not make us sure of belonging to the Church triumphant; for unless we are *individually holy*, unless our names are written in the Book of Life, we shall be at the last cast out. What, then, do we pray for in the Collect?

Andrew. 'Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy Holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'all estates of men'?

Edward. Men of every condition of life.

Miss W. Yes; high and low, rich and poor. And what does 'vocation' mean?

'Does it not mean business?' asked Fred.

Miss W. Business, or calling; that state of life to which God has called us. Has everybody the same vocation?

Edward. No; some are servants, and some are masters; some are clergymen, and some tradespeople, and some scholars.

Miss W. That is quite right, Edward. Now I think you all understand what 'vocation' means. But something else is mentioned besides vocation—what is it?

Several. 'Ministry.'

Miss W. The ministry or office of every man is the work of his vocation. What is the office of a tradesman?

All. To mind his trade.

Miss W. And of a servant?

Several. To do his master's work.

Miss W. And what is the particular ministry of a clergyman?

Charley. To serve in the Church.

Miss W. We have all, then, a ministry according to our vocation. And what do we pray that every man may do in his vocation and ministry?

Several. Serve God truly.

Miss W. Let us now see how we can best do this. Look what St. Paul directs in Romans, xii. 6-9.

Fred. 'Having, then, gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.'

Miss W. Very well; what is each one of us here taught to mind?

Francis. His own business.

Miss W. Yes; and to do it—how?

All. As well as he can.

Miss W. This is, then, the first rule to help us to serve God in our vocation; to mind only our own business, and to do it as well as we can. Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, to do it with all our might. Do you remember any other passage where St. Paul teaches us the same lesson?

George. 'Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.' (Col. iii. 23.)

Miss W. Yes; turn to that text, and see what it follows.

‘Please, ma’am, it follows the directions given to husbands and wives, parents and children, and servants,’ said Edward.

Miss W. And are different duties commanded to these different estates of men?

‘Yes; wives are to submit to their husbands, and husbands are to love their wives,’ said Alfred.

‘Children are to obey their parents, and parents are not to provoke their children,’ continued Charley.

‘And servants are to obey their masters,’ said Fred.

Miss W. And how would each of them be best serving God in his vocation?

Edward. By each minding his own duty.

Miss W. Yes, his duty or ministry. And now look what is said in 1 Cor., vii. 20, 24.

Samuel. ‘Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.’

Miss W. Another rule, then, for serving God in our vocation and ministry is, to keep to that which God has appointed for us. Now, to what vocation has Mr Walton been called?

Alfred. To be a clergyman.

Miss W. And in his vocation, what is his ministry?

Several. To teach the people.

Miss W. But would it be right for you to set up to teach?

Charley. No, ma’am, the like of us couldn’t teach.

Miss W. Exactly. God has not called you to it; it is not the work of your vocation. Now, it is the vocation of some to govern the country. Lord Norgrove, for instance; would it be right for Mr Walton to take his place?

Alfred. No, for then Mr Walton could not teach us.

Miss W. No, he would have to neglect the work of his own vocation, and that must be wrong. Everybody’s duty is to mind his own vocation, and not

to meddle with that of others; but, in these days, boys, you hear much that is false and wrong on this subject; there are men who would persuade you that every one was fit to govern, and to teach, and who try to make you discontented with the state of life in which God has placed you, and with the vocation whereunto you are called.

‘Please, ma’am,’ said Edward, ‘I heard a man say the other day, that everybody was alike, and that we ought not to submit to be governed. I thought he must be saying wrong.’

‘Indeed, he was saying what was very wrong,’ replied Miss Walton, ‘for we are told to obey them that have the rule over us. You should not listen to such false teaching; and it is because you are liable to hear it, against your will, that I have shown you to-day that it is our duty to serve God in our vocation by minding it alone, and doing our business with all our might. But now, boys, let us see how you can make this particularly useful to yourselves. What have all you been called to?’

‘Please, ma’am, to do daily work,’ replied Francis.

Miss W. And whom do you work for?

Several. A master.

Miss W. Then you are servants. Now what is the duty of a servant?

George. ‘Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God.’ (Col. iii. 22.)

Miss W. Yes; and, in another place, servants are told, ‘with good-will to do service;’ and St. Peter says, ‘not only to the good and gentle, but also—?’

‘To the froward,’ said Andrew. (See 1 Pet. ii. 18.)

Miss W. As servants, then, how must you serve God? Is it only by praying or reading the Bible?

Charley. No, by minding our work.

Miss W. Yes ; by being faithful to your masters, you are serving God. Now, supposing your master leaves you to do a piece of work, and tells you to do it as quickly as you can, and the moment his back is turned you begin to play or work idly, is that serving him faithfully ?

All. No.

Miss W. And if you are unfaithful to your master, are you serving God ?

Alfred. No, because we should be disobeying God.

Miss W. Just so ; and on the other hand, if you do your master's work well, because God has bidden you, you are serving Him. Now, when you are bird-keeping, are you never tempted to be unfaithful ?

‘ Please, ma’am,’ said Charley, ‘ we do play sometimes, without minding the birds.’

Miss W. Would you do that if your master was looking at you ?

‘ No,’ said Edgar, ‘ we wait until he's out of sight.’

‘ And you confess that without blushing, do you, Edgar ?’ said Miss Walton. ‘ That is indeed an eye-service, which, you know, you are especially told is wrong.’

‘ Please, ma’am, what does eye-service mean ?’ asked Francis.

Miss W. It means doing your duty only when you are seen by your master. It is an eye-service, because you only do it under the *eye* of your master, and neglect it when he is not looking at you. But when you thus serve your masters, is it a godly service ?

‘ No,’ said Alfred ; ‘ but we don't think of that.’

Miss W. I am afraid you don't, and that is the reason why I mention it ; because you cannot be serving God in your vocation as servants, if you do

not do your work faithfully, as to God and not to man. There is no duty too small to do rightly or wrongly. You are told to obey your masters—are you always careful to do so?

Francis. Not always.

Miss W. I will tell you what I once heard of a boy doing, and then you must judge for yourselves whether you have ever done any thing like it. His master set him to sow beans, and he was to be paid so much a quart. His master showed him how to do it; to make a little hole with a stick in the ground, and to drop a bean into each hole, and desiring him *only to put one* bean into each, he left him. For a time the boy went on doing as he was told, but at length he began to get tired, and thought the quart was diminishing very slowly, and that he should not earn much at that rate; and so instead of working industriously to get on as fast as he could, he thought, ‘Master can’t see me, and he’ll never know if I put two or three beans into each hole, instead of one,’ and forgetting that God saw him, he went on dropping numbers into the same hole, and soon finished his quart, and began another, congratulating himself on his sharpness.*

‘But did not his master find him out?’ asked the boys, eagerly.

Miss W. That makes no difference in the wrongness of his act, does it, boys?

Several. No, ma’am, it was very naughty *any how*.

Miss W. Yes; now you must think whether you are ever guilty of any such conduct towards your masters, for if you are, you cannot be at the same time serving God in your vocation. To be faithful servants, you must be obedient, and gentle, and industrious, at all times; then whom will you be serving as well as your earthly master?

‘God,’ they all answered.

* See Hannah More’s tract, ‘Black Giles the Poacher.’

‘Will you try and remember this, boys?’ said Miss Walton, earnestly; ‘try and remember that the most trifling duty you do for your master, if you do it as well as you can, is also a service to God, and you are as truly serving Him as though you were praying or reading.’

‘We will try,’ whispered several.

Miss W. And while we all try to do our own duties, we must also pray for each other as the Church teaches us in the Collect you have said to-day; that every member in his vocation and ministry may truly and godly serve God.

‘Please, ma’am, do tell us whether the boy was found out,’ said Charley again.

‘Yes, Charley,’ said Miss Walton, ‘he was; for when his master came to look at his work, he found that he had not sown nearly enough ground for the quart, and turning up the soil, he found two or three beans together, so of course the boy was turned away from his situation.’

‘And did not that make him think he had done wrong?’ asked Alfred.

‘I am afraid it did not,’ replied Miss Walton; ‘he was, I dare say, sorry that he lost his situation, but I fear he was not penitent for his sin, for he grew up a wicked, dishonest man. But he had not been taught as you have; he did not know that by doing his master’s work faithfully, he would be serving God in his vocation and ministry.’

‘You may put away your books now,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘because there is a treat in store for you. Did you know that Mr Warble arrived here last evening?’

‘Oh! no,’ cried several of the boys. ‘Do you mean the kind old gentleman who told us stories when he was here before?’

‘The very same,’ replied Miss Walton, ‘and he has promised to tell you a story now, in illustration

of the three Collects for Good-Friday, and perhaps more.'

'Oh! I am so glad,' cried Alfred, in great glee. 'We do *just about* like hearing him tell stories. It is better than reading a book. Will it be very long?'

'I really cannot tell you,' replied Miss Walton. 'I only know he is going to stay with us some weeks, so that he will have time to tell you either one long story, or several short ones. I will go and fetch him, and he shall answer for himself.' As she spoke she rose and left the room.

'I am so glad!' cried Alfred again, starting from his seat as the door closed. 'He has not been here for such a long time; not since last Easter.'

'He always comes about Easter,' returned Francis, 'I wonder we did not think about it. But *harkee!* they're coming; I hear his voice;' and in a moment afterwards the door opened, and Miss Walton, followed by a kind, good, benevolent-looking gentleman, entered the room. He greeted the boys cheerfully, and said he was glad to be among them again.

'But Miss Walton tells me,' he said, 'that I must not stay and talk to you now, as it is getting so late. So sit quietly, boys, and I will begin my story at once.'

The boys quickly obeyed, and it was really a pretty sight to see the old silver-haired gentleman surrounded by such a group of attentive listeners, while he proceeded to tell the following story:—

THE OLD MAN'S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

I WAS wandering once upon a time along the bank of a winding stream. It was on a hot, sultry afternoon in August; scarcely a breath was stirring, and no sound was heard save the singing of the birds, the rippling of the stream, and a distant hum of children's voices; for not very far off there was a

school of orphan children, and this was their hour of play. Their voices sounded joyously, and added to the loveliness of all around me. Being weary with my stroll, I laid me down under the branches of a weeping-ash. Presently I heard the bell of their private chapel calling the children to prayer, and in a few moments the hum of voices had ceased, and all was still. There was nothing to distract or disturb me, and a thousand thoughts soon crowded into my mind. I thought of that little band of children—orphans in this world, but children of a heavenly Father; without what the world would call a home, yet belonging to the great family of the Church; without earthly possessions, and yet heirs of an eternal inheritance in the heavens. I pictured them to myself, when their days at school were over, scattered from each other far and wide, alone in the cold world, and yet *not alone*, because members of that Church in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, but all are *one in Christ*; and thus, I thought, they will not be alone, for all the members of that Body are brothers and sisters in the Lord, and the gracious Head of that Body will be their friend. Wherever their lot may be cast, whatever their vocation may be, they will still be members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; and the Holy Spirit, who governs and sanctifies the Body of the Church, will guide them into the way of peace. Then again I remembered that they might lose all those blessings by their own wilful sin; they might forget their heavenly Father, despise their all-merciful Head, and resist the pleadings of the Spirit within them, and so they would indeed be desolate and miserable; and *this thought made me sad and sorrowful*. As I continued musing, I began to feel drowsy, and at length, quite overcome, I slept. You must forgive

an old grey-headed man this indulgence, boys (said old Mr Warble, smiling), and listen to my dream.

As I slept I dreamed a dream so wonderful and real, that when I awoke again I almost thought it was the truth, and what I saw around me was a dream. I dreamed that I was sailing in a little boat, all alone, in the midst of the mighty ocean. I tried to guide my bark through the rough waves, but they continually broke over the sides of my vessel, and nearly washed me overboard. After a while a storm arose, and drove my little bark about most pitilessly. It was vain for me to endeavour to guide her. I was helpless, and every moment expected to be swallowed up in the deep waters. At length, with an earnest prayer to be guided to some haven of safety, I laid me down at the bottom of the boat, and holding on as well as I could, committed myself to the mercy of the waves. I had not lain long before I felt a strange alteration; the boat that had been tossed about now sailed smoothly, and the water ceased to dash over the sides. I rose immediately, and lo! an angel sat at the helm, and guided my little bark; and, looking round, I saw we were close to land, but a land that I knew not. On the shore a band of children were playing, all dressed in white, and beyond I could distinguish various buildings; but most prominent stood a stone building, with a taper spire, pointing to the blue heavens above. The green fields shone brightly in the sunshine, and lofty trees bounded the shore: behind all there was a long range of hills, which looked a misty blue in the distance.

The bright Being who guided my bark gazed mildly upon me, and in a gentle voice, said, 'In the Island Home thou shalt find a safe haven. I have guided thee through the dangers of the storm, and I will leave thee in a quiet resting-place,' and having said this, before I had time to answer, he ran the boat on shore, and vanished from my sight.

In a moment I was surrounded by the group of children whom I had noticed playing on the shore.

‘Poor stranger,’ they said, ‘you are cold and wet; come with us, and you shall be dried and warmed.’

‘And whose children are you?’ I asked, as I took the hand of a bright, blue-eyed little boy, with a countenance as lovely as the angel who had just guided my bark.

‘We are the children of Him who dwells on high,’ he softly answered.

‘And where do you live?’ I said again.

The child gazed in my face, while he replied, ‘We live in our Island Home, but our home will be more beautiful and glorious some day.’

‘And have you all one home?’ I asked, willing to hear the sweet accents of the child. But this time a taller, dark-eyed boy, stepped up to my side, and answered, ‘Oh, yes, we are all one family now; once we were scattered abroad without a home, but now we are all one in the Island Home.’

I felt surprised at these answers, and looked more closely at the children. They seemed, indeed, like one family, for, as I said before, they were all dressed in white, and round their waists they wore a blood-red belt, and from their necks hung, by a small silver chain of many links, a cross of pearls, beautiful and bright; otherwise they did not look unlike common children; and, as I continued gazing, I saw there was a great difference, even in the group which surrounded me. Some looked restless and discontented, others languid and idle. The dress of some was untidy, and there was one boy who seemed in great danger of losing his cross altogether, for many of the links of the chain had been allowed to open at the joining, and looked as if they might easily separate, and then the cross would fall. Neither was the cross as bright as many of the others, for sand and soil were cleaving to it, and marred the beauty of the

pearls. I turned from it to look at those of my little friend, and of the dark-eyed boy who had last spoken, and I noticed that theirs were kept with great care, not a particle of dust had settled upon them, and each link of the chain by which they hung was kept carefully closed; and then I saw that each link fastened with a clasp, so that it was only the utmost carelessness that allowed them to remain open. I turned again to the little one whose hand I held, and who was guiding me to the houses I had noticed, and said, 'And will you tell me what your name is, little one?'

A serious look came over his happy face, while he answered, 'I was called Angelo when I was made a child of our Father, who dwells on high.'

'And yours, my boy?' I said, speaking to the tall dark-eyed boy.

In the same words he answered, 'I was called Courage when I was made a child of our Father, who dwells on high.'

As he finished speaking I heard, in my dream, the sound of a bell, and the children quickened their pace, saying they must make haste, and Courage came up to my side, and said again—

'That bell is to call us to work; we must hurry on, but Angelo will stay and show you the way.' I willingly consented, and Courage, calling the children round him, proposed that they should run on. And now I noticed a still greater difference among them. Some cheerfully consented, others looked annoyed, and some few expressed their dislike in angry words; among the latter, was the boy whose cross was so soiled; in a tone of displeasure he cried out, 'I shan't hurry; it is quite too bad that our play should be stopped so soon.'

Courage mildly answered, 'We have had an hour's play, Wayward, do come in, or Pastor will be angry.'

'I don't care whether Pastor is angry or not,' replied

Wayward (for this I found was the boy's name); 'it is only you who are frightened of him; I shan't hurry.'

'Courage did not stop to argue with him any more, but taking the hand of a gentle-looking little girl, whom he called Innocence, he ran on, followed by all the group, except Wayward, who sullenly loitered far behind.'

'What work have little ones like you to do?' I asked my guide, as the rest ran on.

'Oh, we have all a different work to do,' he replied. 'We do whatever Pastor tells us, and when we try to do it well, he says we are doing it for our great Father above. Some of us go to school, and some of us work in the garden, and sometimes we carry food to sick people, and many other things.'

'And will Pastor be angry with you for staying with me, Angelo?' I asked.

The boy again gazed in my face, with a look of surprise, and answered, 'How could he be angry? Were you to be left cold, and wet, and tired? Oh! no, he will not be angry; to guide you to him is my work to-day, for Courage told me to.'

'And do you, dear child, always do what Courage tells you?' I asked again.

'Yes, when we are at play, for Pastor sends him with us to take care of us, and keep us out of danger; and I like to do what he tells us, for he always tells us right.'

The clock striking nine, reminded Mr Warble that it was time for him to stop, and to send the boys home. They would all willingly have remained to hear more, but Miss Walton told them they must go cheerfully, and not be discontented and complain, when they had to do what they did not like, as Wayward had done. This thought made them put away *their books cheerfully*, and, without any grumbling, *start off home*.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Second Catechising for Good Friday.

THIRD COLLECT.

merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that Thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

THE next evening, while Miss Walton was taking off her bonnet after coming in from service, the boys were again in the parlour, waiting for her. She was quite so quick as the evening before, and the boys began to chatter.

'Do you know,' said Samuel, 'I was one good half-hour to-day trying to learn the Collect, and yet I can't. There are such hard words in it.'

'Yes, it is hard,' returned Francis. 'I'll tell you how I learnt it. I read it over two or three times before I went to bed last night, and then again this morning, and now I know it. I always find *that* the best way to learn anything. If I had read over the Collect fifty times at once, I shouldn't know it as well as I do now.'

'What stuff! that can't make any difference,' cried

Edgar. 'I'll tell you what, it's very cold.' And as he spoke, he jumped up, and placed himself before the fire, saying, 'Miss Walton's so long about coming, I shall beg leave to warm myself.'

'That may be very pleasant for you,' said George, 'but it is not for us. You keep every bit of fire from us.'

'We'll soon manage that,' returned Edgar; and he immediately stooped down, half sitting on his feet, and half leaning against the fender. Charley, with a quick eye for mischief, without a moment's thought, gave him a push, and over he went, followed by the fender (which was more than Charley bargained for), and the fire-irons rolling on the ground.

'There! now we've done it!' cried Charley, as he started from his seat, and began to try and undo the mischief. 'What will Miss Walton say?'

'That it's all your fault, Charley,' replied Edgar, starting on his feet again. 'Why did you knock me over? She'll come in now and find us in this state; it's all your fault.'

'And who first left his seat?' asked Edward, very quietly; 'he was as *much* to blame, at all events.'

'There was no harm leaving my seat,' returned Edgar. 'I should have sat down the moment I heard Miss Walton coming.'

'Was there no harm in doing what you have been told not to do, Edgar?' said Miss Walton, in a gentle voice. She had entered the room just as the catastrophe happened, but the boys had all been so busily engaged, either in helping to put things right again, or in watching the proceeding, that she had stood behind the group quite unobserved. But now they started as she spoke, and Alfred dropped the poker from his hand, which he was just about to replace on the fender; while Edgar, in no very gentle tone

began to justify himself. Charley, on the other hand, the moment he had recovered his first surprise, crept close up to her side, and said, 'Please, ma'am, I did it, it was all my fault.'

'From what I have heard since I stood here, I think not, Charley,' she answered. 'But all of you take your places now, and then I will hear about it.'

Edgar did not seem quite willing to obey; his temper was somewhat ruffled, and he was beginning to speak again, when Miss Walton repeated her order, and he was obliged to take his seat, and be silent.

Had Edgar not been in so great a hurry to justify himself, he might have found out that Miss Walton was not really angry. She was always willing to make allowances for boys' thoughtlessness, though she was very strict about obedience. Charley soon discovered it, and his fear passed away, though he felt vexed with himself for not remembering that Miss Walton never liked them to play in her room, unless she gave them leave.

When they had all returned to their places, she asked who first left his seat. No one answered, and she continued, 'It was you, Edgar, was it not?'

'Yes, ma'am,' he replied, 'but—'

'You need not make any excuses,' she said; 'rather tell me, Edgar, if I had been in the room, would you have left your place?'

'No, ma'am; but you did not come,' he replied, 'and I was only going to warm myself, and then Charley—'

'Stop, Edgar,' cried Miss Walton, 'I cannot have you so anxious to justify yourself. You will make me really angry with you. Answer my questions, and say no more. You would not have left your place if I had been in the room, you say. Did you remember that I had told you not to do so?'

'No, ma'am, not at first, not till after I was up.'
'But then you remembered,' continued Miss

Walton, 'and thought you would have time to sit down before I came, without my knowing anything about it. Was not it so?'

Edgar's courage had now returned, and he replied, 'Yes, ma'am.'

'Well, now, Edgar,' Miss Walton asked, 'are you quite so sure it was all Charley's fault?'

'No, ma'am,' he now replied, quite honestly; while Charley, without waiting to be asked, said, 'Please, ma'am, it was I knocked him over.'

'And how did all that happen, Charley? you must tell me your share now,' said Miss Walton.

He then told her what my readers already know, finishing by saying, 'So you see it was all my fault.'

'I see,' said Miss Walton, kindly, 'that the noise and hubbub were your fault; your love of mischief, Charley, made you forget my wishes. But, Edgar, did Charley pushing you over, and the fender upsetting, make your fault of forgetfulness any worse?'

'No, ma'am, I suppose not.'

Miss Walton continued: 'Of course it did not; the consequence of our wrong actions does not increase the original fault. I must explain what I mean more fully another time; but now I am quite ready to forgive both of you, if it will only make you very careful to do exactly the same behind my back that you would before my face. Your obedience must not be an eye-obedience, must it, boys?'

'No, ma'am,' they all replied.

'No, boys, I should not like to think I could not trust you to follow my wishes out of my sight. I would not give much for your obedience if I could not. Let, then, your forgetfulness of this evening make you more careful in future, will you?'

'Yes, ma'am,' they heartily answered.

'And you, Edgar,' Miss Walton continued, 'when you get into trouble, never, my boy, be so anxious to

justify yourself; it is almost sure to lead you to say or do something further wrong; be willing, rather, to take your share of blame. Now, Edward, give me your Prayer-Book, and say the Collect, we must begin our lesson.' He stood up and repeated the third Collect for Good Friday, the rest doing the same in turn.

'Now all of you shut your books,' said Miss Walton, 'and tell me what sort of a prayer this is. Do we pray for ourselves or others?'

All. Others.

Miss W. And what is praying for others called?

Francis. Intercession.

Miss W. That is right. This Collect, then, is an intercessory prayer, or prayer of—?

'Intercession,' said several.

Miss W. And what sort of people do we pray for?

Several. Wicked people.

Miss W. Whose enemies are the wicked?

Alfred. The enemies of God.

Miss W. And will God hear prayers offered up for His enemies?

Several. Yes.

Miss W. How do we know that He will?

Edward. Because God hates nothing that He has made, and would not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted, and live.

Miss W. Exactly; therefore, before beginning to pray for His enemies, we remind Him of His love to every thing that He has made. But though God loves sinners, would He have them continue in sin?

Andrew. No, He would have them 'be converted, and live.'

Miss W. What does conversion mean?

None of the boys answered; but at last, Francis said, 'Please, ma'am, we don't know.'

'It means,' Miss Walton then said, '*changed*. "To convert" means to *change* or *turn*, and "to be con-

verted" means to be changed or *turned from one state to another*. Supposing a man has been a drunkard, and then entirely leaves off drinking; we might say he was converted from a drunkard to—what?

Edward. A sober man.

Miss W. Now in what way is a sinner walking? We say God would not the—?

'Death of a sinner,' said several.

Miss W. Then a sinner is in the way of death. What keeps him in that way?

Fred. His sins.

Miss W. What, then, must he turn from, in order to escape death?

Samuel. He must turn from his sins.

'Or be—what?' asked Miss Walton.

'Converted,' replied several of the boys in one breath.

Miss W. And then what way will he be in?

Francis. The way of life.

Miss W. Yes, do you remember what God says by the prophet Ezekiel, about sinners turning from their sins?

George. 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways, and live.' (Ezek. xviii. 23.)

Miss W. Yes, and again in chapter xxxiii. 11.

David. 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?'

Miss W. God would have the wicked turned, or converted, from the way of death to the way of life, from the way of sin to the way of holiness. But is this the work of a moment? Do wicked people wish to be good?

'No, ma'am, if they really wished to be good, they would try to be, and they don't,' said Alfred.

Miss W. What, then, is the first thing that has to be changed?

Alfred. Their wishes.

Miss W. Yes, or *wills*, and this change is often sudden. An illness, or accident, may make a person suddenly have the wish, or will, to be good, which he had not before; but is this change of *will alone* sufficient?

‘No, he must *do* what is right, too,’ said several.

Miss W. And can he learn to do this in a moment? If you have long been accustomed to give way to impatience, can you learn all at once to be quite patient?

‘No, we should have to try very often,’ said Alfred, with a slight blush; for he knew how often he had been *impatient* when he had determined to be patient.

‘Or,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘if you have been accustomed to speak angry words, when you felt angry, would you find it quite easy to be silent?’

‘No, we should be inclined to speak as we are accustomed to do,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, and it is so with all sin. When a man has been long accustomed to sin it is difficult to leave it off. Therefore, though the *will* may be changed suddenly, it will be a long and difficult work to change the actions. Conversion then begins, by probably a sudden change of—what?

‘Our wills,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes, and this is a very important and great change, and must be the beginning of conversion; but is the whole work then done?

Edward. No, we must go on to change our actions.

Miss W. Yes, our actions, words, and even thoughts; and this will be a long and difficult work, which must go on while we live, until we are perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. Now I think you understand what conversion means, we may,

therefore, go on with the Collect. Whom do we pray for?

Several. 'All Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics.'

Miss W. What do we pray that God will take from them?

George. 'Ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of God's Word.'

Miss W. Whither do we pray Him to fetch them?

All. Home to His flock.

Miss W. And what do we pray that they, and all, may be made?

All. 'One fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord.'

'Please, ma'am, what is meant by Turks, Infidels, and Heretics?' asked Fred.

'Turks are a people,' Miss Walton replied, 'who believe in a man called Mahomet, or Mohammed, who pretended to have received a commission from God to found a new religion. He assumed the character of a prophet, and then wrote a book of direction for his followers, called the Koran. His religion spread over a great part of Asia, and there are numbers who still follow him. They are now called Mahometans.'

'Oh, we have heard of Mahometans before,' cried several, 'but we never knew what they were.'

'The Turks,' Miss Walton continued, 'were a fierce people, and compelled nations to receive their religion by force. They fought with many nations, and, when victorious, only granted life on the condition of their enemies becoming Mahometans. Have you ever heard of the Holy War?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said several, 'but we don't know what it means.'

'I can soon explain it to you,' said Miss Walton. 'The Turks, among other conquests, obtained possession of Jerusalem, and all Palestine (the country where our blessed Saviour lived, and performed all

his miracles). This is called the Holy Land, and in times gone by, Christians used to visit the sepulchre of our Lord, and all the places that He had frequented, as an act of devotion ; but when the Turks had obtained possession of the country, they would not allow them to do so any more, desecrating all the holy places, and paying no reverence even to the mount on which our Lord was crucified.'

'Was not that very wrong?' asked Charley.

Miss W. Yes, Charley, it was wrong; they, however, did not believe in Jesus, but in their own fancied prophet, Mahomet, and therefore they did not care to reverence the places where He trod. But when the Bishop of Rome heard how the Holy Land was desecrated, he and a person called Peter the Hermit, preached to the people about it, and told them to go and fight against the Turks, and deliver the Holy Land. Thousands upon thousands at once offered to go, and large armies were raised in England, France, and Germany. 'God willed it,' they said, and this was their battle cry ever afterwards. The soldiers all wore crosses on their left shoulder, and therefore were called crusaders, and the wars with the Turks were called, 'The Crusades; or the Holy War.'

'It was called the Holy War because it was the Holy Land they were fighting for, I suppose,' said Edward.

'Yes, Edward,' replied Miss Walton, 'that is one reason. Another was because it was a religious war. It was not for a worldly motive that they fought, but to deliver holy places from the hands of infidels. And it was also thought to be the especial will of God that they should war. But now we must go on with our lesson. Can any of you tell me the meaning of "infidel?"'

'Please, ma'am, does it mean a person who does not believe?' asked Fred.

drawn out for us ?

Several. In the Creeds.

Miss W. But there are persons who do not believe the doctrines of the Creeds, and teach other doctrines. What are they called ?

‘Heretics,’ said several.

Miss W. And why do we also pray for Jews ?

‘Because they don’t believe that Jesus is our promised Saviour,’ said Francis.

Miss W. Yes ; and for all these we offer the same prayer. What do we ask God to do for them ?

Several. ‘Ignorance, hardness of heart, a contempt of His Word.’

Miss W. What do you mean by ‘contempt’ ?

Fred. Scorn.

Miss W. Yes ; God’s enemies, then, are ignorant of Him, and therefore they despise His Word. Their hearts being hardened, and on this account we pray for them ?

Alfred. ‘That God will have mercy upon them, and fetch them home to His flock.’

in the flock. Does our Saviour ever call Himself a Shepherd?

George. Yes: 'I am the Good Shepherd.' (St. John, x. 11.)

Miss W. And look what He says about His sheep in the 16th verse of the same chapter.

James. 'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be *one fold*, and one Shepherd.'

Miss W. This should teach us, boys, how we ought to look upon Jews, or Heretics. Are we to despise them?

Alfred. No, we must pray for them.

Miss W. They are compared here to sheep gone astray; but cannot they be brought back again?

Several. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. Yet how do we often hear Jews spoken of? Almost as if they were not fellow-creatures. I have no doubt some of you have insulted and despised a beggar, if you discovered that he was a Jew; but this is not what you ought to do, is it?

Francis. No, ma'am; but people always do despise Jews.

Miss W. We must not do as 'people do.' Does the Church teach you to do so?

Charley. No; she teaches us to pray for them.

Miss W. Yes; and remember that God can bring them into the One Fold whenever He sees fit, and then they will be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites. Who are meant by the true Israelites?

Andrew. Good Christians.

'Even among Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics,' said Miss Walton, 'God may have many sheep ready to be brought home; and it is *our* duty, who have been mercifully baptized into the fold before we knew the blessing of it, to pray for these wanderers: for the Good Shepherd gave His life for them. And

instead of despising them, or hating them, we should love them, and seek to do all we can to bring them to the fold. What is the one thing that you can all do?

‘Please, ma’am, we can pray for them,’ said several.

Miss W. Remember, then, that you do really pray for them to-morrow, when this Collect is read in Church, and do not say the words without a thought of their meaning. If you will really pray for Jews, I think you will hardly ill-treat one when you meet with one again, but rather pity than despise him.

‘And now I am not going to ask you any more questions to-night; but I will go and call Mr Warble, who will tell you more of the story which he began last evening,’ said Miss Walton, and closing her Prayer-book, she rose to seek the kind old gentleman.

THE OLD MAN'S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

(*Continued.*)

As Angelo finished speaking (began Mr Warble), we turned from the shore along a road that led to the houses.

‘Oh! there is Pastor coming to meet us,’ said my little guide, and letting go my hand, he ran forward to meet a tall, grave-looking man, who was coming towards us. He was dressed in black, and from his neck, too, hung a cross of pearls, similar to those round the children’s necks. Very brightly it shone in the clear sunlight, more brightly, I thought at first, than any I had seen; but when I compared it with little Angelo’s, methought there was not so much difference. If Pastor’s was brighter, Angelo’s was equally pure. He, too, had a broad red belt round his waist, and in his hand he bore a shepherd’s crook. I watched him as little Angelo caught his hand, and began to speak in eager tones, and I then saw that his countenance, which I had thought grave, and

almost stern, wore a sweet heavenly expression, as he listened to the eager child's simple tale.

'See,' said Angelo, 'I have brought you a poor stranger, who is wet and cold : he came to our Island in a little boat.'

'Peace be with you,' said Pastor, addressing himself to me. 'I came out to meet you, and bid you welcome. for Courage told me you were on the way

I thanked him for his kind greeting, and followed him into a large dwelling, which we had now reached. Very soon I was seated by a warm fire, and a change of clothes was provided for me. Several children were employed to get me what was needful ; and little Angelo brought me food with his own hands and spread it out before me. I longed to ask questions, but all seemed too busily employed to answer me, and I therefore waited patiently for a fitter opportunity, which soon presented itself. When Pastor saw that every thing needful was provided for me, he called Angelo, and said, 'I will leave the stranger to your care now : do all you can for his comfort ; for your Lord and Master, Angelo, was once a stranger too, and inasmuch as ye do it to one of these His brethren, ye do it unto Him.'

'I will, Pastor,' answered Angelo, cheerfully.

'Our Father bless you, dear child,' said Pastor, as he laid his hands on the boy's head, and left the room.

Then I saw in my dream, that Angelo instantly brought a little stool, and sitting down at my feet, asked me if I wanted anything.

'Nothing,' I said, 'but to talk awhile to you ;' and then I continued : 'You do not like to stay with an old man, do you ? You would rather go to your companions ?'

'Oh ! no,' he answered, 'I like to do what Pastor tells me.'

‘And who did Pastor mean was once a stranger?’ I asked.

The child looked serious, while he replied, ‘Our Great Shepherd, who left His glorious throne, and lived a poor stranger in this Island. Pastor tells us often to think of Him, for He loved us very much, and at last died for us, and will one day take us home to the glorious kingdom which He left for our sakes.’

‘And does your Great Shepherd wish you to be kind to strangers?’ I asked.

‘Yes,’ the boy replied; ‘He says it is the same as being kind to Him; and, oh! I like to think I can do anything for Him, because He loves me, and I have been given to Him.’

‘What do you mean, dear child?’ I inquired.

‘Don’t you know,’ he continued, ‘that we were once poor children, without a home, and in the power of a cruel master? We did not know anything about our Good Shepherd; and we thought this Island was the only place we should ever live in. We did not know each other then, for some of us lived beyond the mountains, some further down the shore, and some more distant still. And then our Good Shepherd (though we did not know anything about Him) sent Pastor to us, who brought us together, and washed us in pure water, and gave us our cross of pearls, and our white dresses, and our blood-red belts, which, he said, our Good Shepherd had sent to us. And when we were washed, he said, we no longer belonged to the cruel master whom we served before, but that we were the children of our Father, who dwells on high; and he told us that whatever we do—whether we are playing, or working, or learning, we must try to remember Him, and to serve Him faithfully.’

‘But how can you serve Him,’ I asked, ‘when you are at play, or learning?’

‘By doing just what He bids us,’ the child answered.

‘And how do you know what He bids you?’ I asked again.

‘Pastor tells us now,’ the boy replied; ‘but when we are men, we shall read for ourselves, in a Holy Book, which tells us all we ought to do. We read it sometimes now, and Pastor reads it to us, and tells us what it means.’

‘And does your old master never try to get you back again to be his servants?’ I inquired.

When I asked this, Angelo’s countenance suddenly changed, and an expression of sorrow and pain quickly overspread it, while he replied, ‘Yes, he often, very often does; he tries to make us wish for what we ought not to have, and he tries to make us forget how good our Father, and our Shepherd are; and if we listen to him, we shall become his servants again.’

‘You say, dear child, that he *tries* to make you; are you strong enough to resist him?’

‘I strong enough! Oh, no! not by myself; but our Good Father does not leave us alone; when we were washed, He put within us One whom Pastor calls the Holy Comforter, and He will always help us if we ask Him. We cannot see Him, but we know that He is with us, because the Holy Book tells us so. He will always guide us right if we listen to Him.’

‘And how does He speak?’ I said.

‘He speaks gently within us,’ replied the child, in a sweet, low tone; ‘so gently, that none can hear Him but those who listen for His voice, but so clearly, that we cannot help but hear Him, unless we are very naughty, and refuse to listen; and we *are* naughty sometimes,’ he continued, while tears started from his eyes, and chased each other quickly down his cheeks.

I found it hard to restrain my own tears, when I saw the quick, tender feelings of the innocent boy, and for a few moments we neither of us spoke. I seemed, in my dream, to think over all he had said to me, and the more I thought, the more wonderful it appeared, and the more real. Our thoughts were, however, suddenly interrupted by the entrance of Pastor, who, telling Angelo to go to Guido (which I afterwards found was the name of the master who helped the children in their studies), led me into a large garden, where numerous children were busy at work. I had followed in silence, for Angelo's words were still sounding in my ears, but my attention was quickly roused by the scene around me.

'From whence,' I asked, 'come this multitude of children?'

'They are gathered,' Pastor replied, 'out of every nation, and kingdom, and people, to be one fold, under one Shepherd. Nor do you here see all the sheep. We are but a part of the great multitude, which no man can number. New sheep are continually being brought into the fold, some in one part of the island, some in another, and there is also a happy company, who have finished their work, and gone to their glorious home above. Their steps we are trying to follow, that we, with them, may be partakers of the glorious rest in store for the members of the Island Home, when the time of their trial is over, and their work is done.'

'And are all these children sure to attain to this glorious home?' I asked.

'Mark what thou seest, and judge for thyself,' replied Pastor. 'He that is faithful unto death, shall receive a crown of life.'

I immediately turned my attention to what I saw in my dream was going on about me. In one part of the garden two or three children were digging different squares of ground; in another, they were

clearing away weeds; in another, sowing seeds. Others, again, were watering flowers, while another group were training trees against a wall. Each had an appointed employment, and no one seemed to be overlooking them.

‘How is it,’ I said, ‘that the children work alone. Can you trust them to fulfil their tasks?’

‘Yes,’ Pastor answered, ‘I trust them alone at times, to prove them, and to try them. They are working for an unseen Master, whose Eye is ever upon them.’

As he finished speaking, we drew near to the group who were engaged in digging, and in a moment I recognised Courage, who, with his back turned towards us, was busily employed.

‘Well done, good and faithful boy,’ said Pastor, ‘you have thus early well-nigh finished your day’s work.’

He started at the sound of Pastor’s voice, for our approach had been unnoticed by him.

‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘I have nearly done. When I have quite finished, may I go and help Innocence? See! her can of water is heavy, and she looks tired.’

‘Yes, dear boy,’ replied Pastor; and then he whispered to me, ‘Blessed are the merciful.’

Turning from Courage, he addressed a pale-faced child I had not before observed.

‘Why do you look so unhappy, Timid?’ he asked, laying his hand kindly on the boy’s shoulder.

‘I shall never get my ground finished,’ he replied, sadly. ‘See! Courage has done, but I have not nearly.’

‘Be strong and hopeful, my child,’ replied Pastor. ‘Work with all your might, and it will soon be done.’

And as he spoke, I noticed the boy’s eyes brightened, and he set to work again with spirit, whereas before he had been digging listlessly, as though

oppressed with the feeling that he could never finish his task.

To each boy Pastor spoke a few words, either of praise, or encouragement, or warning, and then leaving that group, we passed on to those who were clearing away weeds; as we neared them, I noticed one boy, who was standing idle while we were at a distance, quickly stoop down and begin to weed. Pastor noticed it also, and going up to the boy, he said, 'Slothful, work "not with eye-service, but . . . with good will, as to the Lord, and not to men."' The boy blushed, and for awhile he worked more diligently; but when Pastor had been gone some little time, I grieved to see him again idling. Each child's allotted work seemed to be according to his ability, and it was his duty to finish it in the hour of labour. We now drew near to a plot of ground which was no larger than the rest, but which was not yet half weeded, and the boy whose portion it was, stood resting against a tree. He did not move as Pastor approached, and I saw that it was Wayward. In the same grumbling tone in which I had heard him speak to Courage, he now addressed Pastor.

'I can do no more work; I am tired, and it is hot,' he said.

'If any child will not work, neither shall he eat,' Pastor answered; and his voice was stern as he spoke, and I saw that Wayward trembled beneath his eye, and sullenly turned to his weeding.

Pastor spoke again; 'Fear not me only, Wayward, rather "fear Him who hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear Him."'

Wayward's brow darkened, but he replied not, and we turned from him. I feared, however, that he was not faithful, and that unless he altered strangely, he would lose the crown in store for him.

From the garden we proceeded into a large room, where other children were engaged in study, and

among them I noticed the same difference as I had observed among the workers in the garden. Some were learning, as though the Eye of their Unseen Master were upon them; others were diligent while they thought they were observed by Guido, while a few were wilfully idle and inattentive.

Guido was a younger man than Pastor, but his dress was the same, yet he carried not a crook, and seemed to look up to Pastor as one above him. Under Guido again, there was another teacher, who I found was named Stephen: Both he and Guido were employed in instructing a party of children, as we entered the room. I listened to Guido, and found he was speaking to the group which stood round him, of the good things they enjoyed in their Island Home, and he told them that there were many children on distant parts of the island who yet knew nothing of their Good Shepherd, or their Father above; 'and you, dear children,' he said, 'must pray for them, that they may be brought home to the flock, and be saved from the hand of their cruel master, for the Good Shepherd is able to bring them in whenever He sees fit,' and then he told them that other holy men, like Pastor, had gone among these children to try and rescue them, and that there were daily new sheep added to the flock. 'Even this very day,' he continued, 'there is one little one who is to be washed and made one of us. Will you not joyfully receive him?'

The children answered, that they would most willingly and gladly have him among them.

'I will go on with my story to-morrow, if all be well, boys,' said Mr Warble, when he came to this point of the history. 'Miss Walton looks as if she thought it was time to stop.'

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Third Catechising for Good Friday.

THE FIRST COLLECT.

Almighty God, we beseech Thee graciously to behold this Thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross, who now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

THE morning of Good Friday rose calm and beautiful. Not a breath was stirring, nor a cloud flitting across the deep blue sky. There was still a sharpness in the air, which reminded Miss Walton, as she strolled up and down her garden, that winter had but just departed; and yet the birds were singing, and the bees had ventured out into the sunshine, and the air was filled with a sweet scent, as of half-bursting flowers. Over all there was a strange stillness, which was only broken now and then by a sound from the village below, which reached the quiet garden shade. Surely such a scene was one of gladness!

How was it, then, that a solemn sadness pervaded everything? The sun was shining, but it seemed to shine on hidden sorrow; the birds were singing, but their voices seemed tuned to sadness. The very sounds from the village were hushed.

Miss Walton had just paused in her walk, and was looking over the wide-spread valley beneath her, and thinking how the solemn stillness of the scene harmonized with the awful solemnity of that day of sorrow, when she was roused by approaching foot-

steps, and turning round, saw little Alfred close by her.

‘Please, ma’am,’ he said, ‘Mr Walton sent me to you, to tell you that he is going to the school, if you will stay and teach us here.’ And having said this, he stood a moment gazing upon the view before him (for Alfred loved the beautiful), without appearing to hear Miss Walton’s answer; and at length he exclaimed, ‘Is it not beautiful!’

‘It is very lovely,’ replied Miss Walton.

‘And yet,’ he said, as if suddenly remembering himself, ‘we must not be glad to-day, must we?’

‘We will think a little of what happened to-day,’ Miss Walton answered, ‘and then we shall see how far we are to be glad,’ and as she spoke she walked along, and Alfred by her side. ‘What do we think of to-day?’ she asked.

‘Our blessed Saviour dying on the cross,’ he replied, reverently.

Miss W. And while He hung on the cross, what was He enduring?

‘Very great suffering,’ said Alfred.

‘Yes, truly, very awful agony,’ Miss Walton continued. ‘And why had He to bear the piercing nails, the crown of thorns, a burning thirst, and mockery and insult: for whose sake, Alfred?’

‘For our sakes,’ he solemnly replied.

‘Now supposing by your own fault you had caused somebody you love very much to suffer a great deal of pain and agony of mind, could you be happy while you thought about it?’

‘Oh, no!’ he answered. ‘I never feel happy if I have vexed you or Mr Walton.’

‘But have we not all done this, Alfred? Our blessed Saviour loved us with exceeding love, yet we, by our own sins, brought sufferings upon Him. How must we feel, then, when we remember this?’

‘We must feel very sorry,’ he said, ‘and ashamed; but we do not always remember it.’

‘No, dear-boy, we do not always, for to have such a thought constantly weighing upon our minds would be more than we could bear; but, to-day, Alfred, the Church has set apart for such thoughts, and we ought to feel sad when we contemplate the bitter pain endured for us to-day, and we should try and keep it in mind, and humble ourselves, because our own sins cost our Saviour so much. But still, Alfred, it is not all dark, and sad. We may feel *thankful*, if not joyful, for what did Christ’s death obtain for us?’

‘Eternal life,’ he replied.

‘Yes; then to-day, dear boy, we must not let worldly gladness take our minds off from our suffering Lord, but we may enjoy a holy thankfulness for the great things which were done for us to-day. And let this beautiful scene, which seems to invite you to gladness, remind you of God’s great goodness, shown most wonderfully in the gift of His Son to die for us; and let it remind you, Alfred, that it is for the sake of your suffering Lord, that you are allowed to enjoy any pleasures. Every good thing speaks of Him, and comes to us through Him, and for His sake. If we remember this, we shall learn to love Him more entirely.’

Little Alfred looked thoughtful, as he and Miss Walton entered the house. The rest of the class had now arrived, and Miss Walton began the lesson.

‘What do we ask God to behold in the Collect to-day?’ she asked.

All. His family.

Miss W. What is meant by His ‘family?’

Several. The Church.

Miss W. Has the Church been compared to a family in any other Collect?

‘It has been compared to a household, which means the same,’ said Edward.

- A mummy, they all replied.

Miss W. Can you give me any texts Bible which speak of the Church by the name?

George. 'For this cause I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the family in heaven and earth is named.' (Eph. iii. 14, 15.)

Edward. 'He is the Head of the Church.' (Col. i. 18.)

Miss W. Yes; and is the Church called 'one' and 'shepherd'?

Alfred. (St. John, x. 16.)

Miss W. How do we ask God to bless His family?

Several. 'Graciously.'

Miss W. What does 'graciously' mean?

Francis. With kindness, or favour.

Miss W. Is there any other petition?

Edward. No, the rest of the Collect is about the Saviour's death.

Miss W. We simply ask God in this Collect to look graciously upon His family as a whole, and do the same in the next?

Miss W. Now, why do you think to-day is chosen for these different prayers of intercession ?

‘Because Christ died for the *whole* world to-day,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes ; do you remember what St. John says about this in his Epistle ?

George. ‘And He is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but *also for the sins of the whole world.*’ (1 St. John, ii. 2.)

Miss W. If, then, Christ died for the whole world, even for His enemies, we may pray for *them*, as well as for the whole Church, and every member of the same. Bishop Sparrow says, ‘This day Holy Church prays expressly for all Jews, Turks, and Infidels, enemies of the Cross of Christ ; for this day Christ both prayed and died for His enemies ; and as He expressed the height of His love to-day in dying for them, so does the Church her height of charity in praying for them.’ When did He pray for His enemies ?

Francis. When He prayed, ‘Father, forgive them.’

Miss W. But for what do we especially say Christ was contented to suffer death ?

Fred. For the family of God.

Miss W. Look at Eph. v. 25.

James. ‘Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it.’

Miss W. What does ‘contented’ mean ?

Andrew. Satisfied.

Miss W. Yes, Christ was satisfied to suffer, or willingly suffered, for His Church. What is said in the fortieth Psalm, appointed for to-day, about Christ’s suffering willingly ?

Samuel. ‘Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of Me, that I should fulfil Thy will, O my God : I am *content* to do it.’

Miss W. Holy David often spoke, as it were, in the person of Christ, and prophesied of His sufferings.

Where else do we read this verse in the service to-day?

Edward. In the Epistle.

Miss W. Yes, look at the Epistle, boys, and will there see that the words are applied to Christ? What does it say He offered Himself for, when said, 'Lo! I come?'

Alfred. For a sacrifice.

Miss W. What were the Jewish sacrifices?

Several. Bulls and goats.

Miss W. Could they take away sin?

George. No, 'it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.'

Miss W. Then sin could never have been pardoned by the shedding of the blood of animals alone?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. Who, therefore, offered Himself, instead of these sacrifices of the law?

Charley. Our blessed Saviour—'Lo! I come.'

Miss W. Yes, He did away with the Jewish sacrifices, which were but shadows, and offered Himself 'once for all.' How often were the Jewish sacrifices offered up?

George. Some daily; others yearly.

Miss W. But Christ was offered up—only?

'Once,' said several.

Miss W. Yes, but what I want you particularly to notice, is, that Christ *offered Himself*, which makes His sacrifice of Himself complete. Did the bulls and goats offer themselves?

Several. No, ma'am, others offered them.

Miss W. But was it so with our blessed Saviour?

Alfred. No, He offered Himself.

Miss W. To whom did He offer Himself?

Francis. To God the Father.

Miss W. Yes, He offered Himself a sacrifice to God the Father for man's sake. Now, when do we see Him entirely resigning His will to His Father?

Edward. When He said, 'Not My will, but Thine be done.'

Miss W. That is right, Edward. Then He freely offered His will a sacrifice to God, or, as the Collect says, He was *contented* to suffer. When did He offer His body?

Fred. When He allowed Himself to be betrayed.

Miss W. Did He know that He was going to be betrayed?

George. Yes; He had told His disciples that one of them should betray Him.

Miss W. And He had also said to Judas, 'That thou doest, do quickly.' (St. John, xiii. 27.)

'And,' continued Edward, 'in the garden He said, "Behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners . . . lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand."' (St. Mark, xiv. 41, 42.)

Miss W. He was, then, *contented to be betrayed*; and when was He really offered up?

All. When He was nailed to the cross.

Miss W. What, then, was the Altar on which He suffered?

Several. The cross.

Miss W. And who was the priest that offered Him?—When Jewish priests offered a lamb, by whose will was the lamb offered?

Samuel. By the will of the priest.

Miss W. Christ was offered. By whose will?

Alfred. By His own will.

Miss W. Yes; He says, '*I lay down My life for the sheep—no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.*' (St. John, x. 15 and 18.) Who, then, was the priest?

Charley. Jesus Himself.

Miss W. He was both Priest and Sacrifice when He was 'contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross.' And for whose sake, boys?

‘For our sakes,’ they all answered.

Miss W. Yes, for the sake of the Family of God, of which we have been made members. But how came His death to be necessary?

‘Because of man’s sin,’ replied Francis.

‘Because of our sins,’ said Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, Alfred, you are right; He suffered because of the sins of each one of us. We helped on His sufferings. But might He not have left us in our sins?

Charley. He might have left us, but He did not, because He loved us.

Miss W. Each one of you, boys, try and remember this: that Christ might have left you to perish in your sins, but, instead of doing so, He loved you, and offered Himself up to sufferings and death for your sakes. Try and think to-day of all He bore for you; put away thoughts of your play or work, and think of your Saviour hanging on the cross, the nails piercing through His sacred Hands and Feet, the blood pouring from the wounds, and the crown of thorns pressing into His brow, while a burning thirst was adding to His sufferings. And think, boys, that every naughty thing *you* have done, increased His agony, for He bore the weight of *your* sins while He hung upon the tree. And then tell me, boys, what should these thoughts lead you to?

‘To be sorry for our sins,’ said several.

‘To love our Saviour,’ said Charley and Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, both one and the other. You must mourn for your own faults, and you must love Him who has so loved you, and who, by His death to-day, procured for us—what, boys?

Several. Eternal life.

Miss W. Although, then, it is meet and right that to-day we should sorrow, and put away sounds of mirth and gladness, yet it is a day of comfort also, because our suffering Lord procured for us such good

things. And where is He now, who once suffered for His Church?

Andrew. He 'liveth and reigneth with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.'

Miss W. Then, although He died this shameful and cruel death, He is not lost to us?

Edward. No, He rose again.

Miss W. What does the Epistle say of this?

George. 'But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.'

Miss W. This Collect leads us to contrast His suffering, as on this day, the death of the cross, with His living and reigning on the right Hand of God. But we must not stay to draw this out. There is only one thing more I would have you now remember. You say, that by His sufferings and death, He showed that He loved us. Does He love us still?

Fred. Yes, ma'am.

Miss W. Yes, truly, He changes not; and He who loved us in suffering, loves us in glory; therefore, having such an High-priest over the house of God, how must we draw near to Him?

Several. 'With a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.'

Miss W. Yes, because it is our suffering Lord, who lives and reigns in heaven, we may draw near to Him in prayers for pardon and for grace, in full assurance of faith or belief; for He has opened a way of access through His own most precious blood.

And now it was Church-time, and two and two the boys left Mr Walton's house. Alfred and Charley, who generally walked together, spoke in low, subdued tones to each other as they walked along, as though they remembered the solemn words that had

just been spoken. Edward and Andrew looked grave, and hardly spoke at all, while some of the others seemed entirely to forget, in the bright sunshine, that it was the day of their Saviour's agony.

Miss Walton fixed with them to come up in the afternoon, when she said Mr Warble would go on with his story.

THE OLD MAN'S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

(Continued.)

So I saw in my dream, that as I stood pondering over the words which Guido had spoken to the children, and hoping that I might be allowed to see the 'little one' he had mentioned admitted into the Island Home, the children began to clear away their books, and Pastor, Guido, and Stephen, with several of the boys, left the room, while I remained watching the proceedings of the rest. Presently I heard a peal of bells begin to ring merrily, and the children quickly formed themselves into a long line of two and two, and began to walk away. I followed them at some little distance, as they bent their steps towards the stone building I had noticed on my arrival, whose silvery bells were now calling them to evening prayer. From all quarters I noticed children pouring in, some from the garden, where I had seen them working, some from the shore, and some from the surrounding country, and there was also the large body from the school. Many others, grown up people, men and women, old and young, were crowding to the house of prayer.

The sound of the children's merry voices ceased as they approached the enclosure round the holy building, and they stood as if waiting for admittance. I hastened on, and as I reached the gate, was met by Stephen, who, clothed in a long white garment, had come out of the Church to overlook the children.

He led me to the door, where we stood watching them, as they noiselessly entered the Holy House, and knelt with their hands clasped, and their eyes closed in secret prayer. Deeply solemn was the scene. The building was in the form of a cross, and through the dark-stained glass of the west window, streamed, in varied colours, the rays of the setting sun. The light over the whole building was dim, for all the windows were stained the deepest blue and crimson, green and gold, whereby all outward sights were excluded, and an air of solemnity was spread around. There were not many ornaments in the building, and what few there were, had been chosen to help the worshippers to fix their thoughts on the far-off land. The cross led their thoughts to *Him* who hung thereon, and the short sentences painted on the walls, were messages from the Father of all.

When the children had entered, we too followed, while the bell ceased to ring, and all sounds were hushed. In a moment a door opened, and Pastor, Guido, and Stephen (who had left me after appointing me my place), followed by twelve boys in white robes, entered at the east end of the building, and took their places down each side. The rest of the assembly were in the body of the building, all standing with their faces eastward.

A few moments passed, and then I heard in my dream, that Guido, in a clear, low voice, began to read. He read of the mercy and love of their Unseen Father, and then, falling on their knees, they all, with one accord, in tones of penitence, confessed their own unworthiness, and that they had gone astray from His ways like sheep that are lost.

A moment's silence followed this general confession, when the deep, calm tones of Pastor were heard pronouncing, in the name of their Unseen Father, and for the sake of their good Shepherd, pardon and absolution to all those who truly repented.

I thought, as these words were spoken, the eyes of Timid, who was kneeling by me, brightened, and he ceased to sigh as he had done during the confession of sin; and I thought that, perhaps, he remembered that at the beginning of his morning's work he had not been diligent, and that the message of pardon now sounded sweetly in his ears; I thought that it might be so, but I knew not.

The words of prayer being ended, the congregation rose, and a hymn of praise burst from the lips of the assembled multitude. The twelve boys who formed the choir led the congregation. They did but lead it, for scarcely a voice was silent as the sweet solemn sounds rang through the lofty-arched roof. 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!' was the burden of the song, and I almost thought it was the song of angels; or, at least, that angels' voices were mingled with the voices of the people, for every now and then the sound was so sweet and heavenly, that it seemed to me it could scarcely proceed from man alone. The song being ended, the sacred book of which Angelo had spoken, was read by Stephen, while the people listened with silent and deep attention. Thus the service went on, varied by reading, prayer, and praise.

But now there was a pause, and slowly descending the steps which led into the body of the building, Pastor proceeded to a large stone vase of water, which beautifully caught the rays of the setting sun. It stood in a space by itself, under the lofty spire which terminated the building at the west end. Round it assembled a group of people, and one woman carried a babe in her arms, and I thought it must be the little one Guido had mentioned. I approached the group, and I wondered in myself, whether one so young as that babe, for it seemed not many weeks old, would be admitted into the Island Home. But I did not wonder long, for after praying

that the Father above would bless and mercifully receive that present infant, Pastor addressed the people in some such words as these: 'Beloved,' he said, 'doubt not, but earnestly believe that our Father will graciously receive this little infant as a member of the Island Home, for the Great Shepherd gave His life for such as these, and He has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Consider, beloved, what our Good Shepherd was contented to suffer that this babe, and all of us, might have life. Think of Him, leaving His home in glory, and coming to dwell in poverty and sorrow on this lone Island. "He was despised and rejected of men, and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him, He was despised and we esteemed Him not." From childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, He lived in sorrow, and then was contented to be betrayed by His own followers into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross. There, in pain and agony, He hung for this poor babe, and for each one of us. He offered Himself a sacrifice for sin, that we, through Him, might be saved. And as He hung, His side was pierced, and forthwith came thereout blood and water, and thus was there an ever-flowing "fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," in which we may wash and be clean.

'And now, beloved,' he continued, 'we will wash this little one in pure water, which has been sanctified by our Great Shepherd passing through it before us, and doubt not that while his body is washed outwardly with water, his soul shall be washed in the blood of our crucified Shepherd, and that he shall be delivered from the power of the enemy, and be regenerate, and made the child of our Unseen Father by adoption and grace, and shall receive the gift of the Holy Comforter, whereby he shall have strength to fight manfully against sin, the

world, and the cruel master from whose power we have been delivered.'

Having said this, he asked three of those who stood round, whether, in the name of the child, they would promise to renounce the service of the cruel master; whether they would promise to believe all the articles of the faith, and obediently to walk in the holy will and commandments of the Father above. And I heard in my dream that they all audibly answered that they would so promise in the name of the child, which promise, when he came to age, himself would be bound to perform.

The babe having thus promised by his sureties, Pastor and those around him again knelt in prayer, begging their Unseen Father, whose dearly-beloved Son had shed out of His side water and blood, to sanctify that water to the mystical washing away of sin, and to grant that that child then to be washed therein might receive the fulness of His grace, and ever remain among the number of His faithful and elect children, through the death of the Great Shepherd.

Having now risen from their knees, Pastor proceeded to take the child in his arms, and instantly plunged him beneath the pure water, saying, 'Content, I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' And when he rose again, a sweet, peaceful expression beamed over the features of the lovely babe.

And now I saw that a white dress was given to him because of his innocency, and a cross of pearls was hung round his neck, in token that he was now a member of the Island Home, for which, as well as for all the inhabitants of the Island, the Good Shepherd had suffered on the cross, and the blood-red belt was buckled round his little waist, to remind him that having been washed in the blood of the Shepherd, he was bound to be-

lieve and to do all that had been promised in his name.

A joyful hymn of thanksgiving concluded this wondrous service, and then the little one was carried among the children, who greeted him with joy, and received him among them as a brother. Pastor returned to his place, and the prayers continued for a few short minutes, and then was there a solemn silence, and one by one the congregation arose and slowly departed, until the holy building was quite deserted.

As I reluctantly left the sacred walls little Angelo joined me. He was one of the choir, and came out of a different door to the rest of the congregation. He took my hand, and we proceeded for some time in silence. Then I thought in my dream that I turned to speak, but the first glance I caught of his face made me start. The beautiful glow of health that had tinged his cheeks in the morning, had now passed away, and a deadly paleness overspread his lovely countenance. 'Angelo, are you ill?' I said; 'you look so pale, my child.'

'I am weak and tired,' he answered; 'but never mind. I think when I feel so, that perhaps my Father is going to send for me to His glorious home above the blue sky, and then I do not mind about it.' He stopped, as he spoke, and looked towards the heavens, which were still glowing with the rays of the sun already sunk to rest. 'See,' he said, 'the sun has gone to rest, but he will rise again beautiful and bright; and we hope to do the same for the sake of our suffering Shepherd. Perhaps I may soon be called away, and my body will be laid in the cold grave. I fear the thought of that,' he said, with some alarm; 'but,' he continued, 'I ought not to mind it, because our Good Shepherd was laid in the grave before us, and as He rose, so shall we rise, if we are one with Him.'

As Angelo spoke, his countenance became more beautiful, though more deadly pale. At that moment Courage approached us: he looked at Angelo, and that one glance seemed to show him what was needed, for quickly and gently he took the fainting boy in his arms, and laying his head tenderly on his shoulder, he carried him rapidly towards their dwelling. Not a sign of fear or uncertainty did the brave boy show in his movements, nor did he speak to me; but I saw that his tears were flowing quickly down his cheeks, while in a low sorrowful tone, he murmured, 'Angelo, Angelo, how shall I live without you! Are you so soon going to leave us for the land that is very far off?'

But Angelo heeded not, for his strength had quite failed him, and he had fainted in the arms of his friend.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Easter-Even.

COLLECT.

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him ; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection ; for His merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

NOTWITHSTANDING the many Saturday evening occupations of both old and young, boys and girls, of Forley, yet on Easter-Eve nearly all the first-class children were able to be at Mr Walton's house, for a lesson, an hour before evening service, which was to commence at the late hour of half-past eight, to enable as many as possible to gather together for prayer at this hour of solemn rest—rest to the weary body of our all-merciful Saviour, which after mockery and insult, langour and torture, was now reposing in the calm still grave. The great work of redemption being finished, His hour of agony being past, His body, wrapped in pure white linen, rested in the tomb, awaiting the morning of the glorious resurrection.

Dear young reader, turn your thoughts for a few moments to the silent tomb, and think Whose sacred body lay there, as it were, to-day. Think of all the weariness, the hunger and thirst, the insult and suffering, that sinless body underwent, before it found

a resting-place in the stillness of the tomb; and think for whose sake it lay there at all. *There lies our Saviour*, that He may 'ransom *us* from the power of the grave, and redeem *us* from death.' He ransomed us with His own body and blood. That was the price He paid for our redemption, and through Him death has lost its sting, and the grave its victory.

We, too, must lie in the cold tomb, but it is no longer a place of hopeless darkness, because Christ has lain there before us; and He who lay there, as it were, to-day, has, by His glorious resurrection, overcome death and the grave.

But turn not yet to contemplate His resurrection. Let us rather, with the holy Marys, watch by His sepulchre, and meditate upon His sacred body in the repose of the tomb; let us bury in that grave all our corrupt affections, all our unruly passions; and let us learn to adore with all our powers Him who thus offered Himself up wholly a sacrifice for our sins.

And now, reader, let us try and follow Miss Walton, and her boys, through their lesson on this sacred Eve.

The boys read the Collect, said the Epistle and Gospel, and then Miss Walton asked, 'What does the Church commemorate to-day, boys?'

All. Our Saviour lying in the tomb.

Miss W. What had He passed through before He was laid in the grave?

Several. Sufferings and death.

Miss W. Yes; and then what followed His death?

'He was buried,' replied several.

Miss W. And what do we pray that we may be *with Him*?

'Buried with Him,' said Edward.

Miss W. But can we be buried without being first dead with Him?

'No, ma'am,' they all replied.

Miss W. What does the Collect say we are baptized into?

Alfred. The death of Christ.

Miss W. And what does the Catechism teach you is the inward grace of Baptism?

Several. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. By nature what are we?

Samuel. 'Born in sin, the children of wrath.'

Miss W. Do we so remain after Baptism?

Edward. No, we are by Baptism delivered from wrath, and made the children of grace.

Miss W. Does that mean to say that we are made quite free from the power of sin? Look at what is said in the IXth Article.

Fred found the place in his Prayer-Book, and read, 'And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated.'

Miss W. That is right. Our proneness to sin is not at once destroyed, though the guilt of sin is removed. For what are we still inclined to?

All. Evil.

Miss W. But though inclined to evil, have we not power to resist it?

Alfred. Yes, by the help of God's Holy Spirit.

Miss W. And through the power of the new nature, imparted—when?

Several. In our Baptism.

Miss W. Yes; and from that time what does St. Paul say the flesh and the spirit are, towards each other?

George. They are contrary the one to the other. 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.' (Gal. v. 17.)

Miss W. The sinfulness of our nature at our Baptism received, as it were, its death-wound. We were baptized into—what?

David. The death of Christ.

Miss W. Yes, in order that, as St. Paul says, we may 'die daily:' that we may mortify those corrupt affections which are not dead, though wounded. And this will lead us to what follows in the Collect, and which is what I particularly wish you to notice. As we have already been baptized into the death of Christ, so we pray God to grant that we may be—?

'Buried with Him,' continued Alfred.

Miss W. And how are we to be buried with Him?

Francis. By continual mortifying our corrupt affections.

Miss W. What do you mean by 'to mortify?'

Several. To vex, to destroy.

Miss W. Yes, but it means even more than that. It means *to make dead*. Now what is it that we are continually to mortify or make dead?

All. Our corrupt affections.

Miss W. What does 'corrupt' mean?

Several. Evil, decayed.

Miss W. Something that has been good and become evil, we should call corrupt.

'Our bodies will corrupt when they lie in the grave, will they not?' asked Edward.

Miss W. Yes, they are sound before being laid in the grave, and then they become corrupt. And now, before we go on with the Collect, you must try and understand what is meant by 'affections.'

'Please, ma'am, does not affection mean love?' asked Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, Alfred, but affections mean more than that. They mean any *passion of the mind*, as fear, hope, hatred, revenge, shame, and trust. Now, when God made man, were his affections evil?

George. No, 'God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.' (Gen. i. 31.)

Miss W. Adam, in the garden of Eden, was perfect, and all the affections or passions of his mind

* See Catechising on the Collect for the Circumcision of Christ.

were good. The affection of love, for instance. Whom did He love?

All. He loved God.

Miss W. Any one else?

Charley. Yes, he loved Eve when she was made.

Miss W. His love, then, was all placed on what was right. What was it that changed his affections?

‘Sin, I suppose,’ said Edward.

‘We shall see,’ said Miss Walton, ‘that they were changed in a moment, when sin had defiled him, and that his love had become corrupt. After he had sinned, did he love Eve or himself most?’

Francis. Himself, for he tried to throw the blame off himself, upon Eve.

Miss W. Yes, his love turned to—what sort of love?

Edward. Self-love.

Miss W. What other affections showed themselves after the fall?

Fred. Fear: he was afraid of God.

‘And shame,’ said Edward. ‘He was ashamed of being naked.’

Miss W. Was he afraid of God’s presence before he sinned?

Alfred. No, God had been with him, and brought the animals to him to name, and we are not told that he was afraid.

Miss W. Whatever fear he had before the fall, was a holy, lawful fear; but when he sinned, then his affections became corrupt. Now, it is God that has given us all the affections of our minds, and what have they, by sin, become?

Samuel. Corrupt.

Miss W. And seeing that they are corrupt, what are we continually to do?

Andrew. To mortify them.

Miss W. That we may be—?

‘Buried with Christ,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Can light shine upon a dead body lying

in the grave, or can it be influenced by any thing going on around?

All. No, ma'am, it is shut out from everything.

Miss W. Yes, there may be fighting, or revelling, or there may be mirth, or gladness, going on all around, but do the sounds reach the grave?

'No, it is all still and quiet there,' said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, no such sounds can even approach those who lie buried in the grave. Now, what were we made partakers of in our Baptism?

Samuel. The death of Christ.

Miss W. Yes, but we are to be more than dead with Him: as we pass through this world, we are to strive to be—?

'Buried with Him also,' said several.

Miss W. That is, we are not to be influenced by our corrupt affections, even as outward things do not influence, and cannot come near a body laid—where?

Andrew. In the grave.

Miss W. A dead body, even before being laid in the grave, is not influenced by outward things, but one buried is entirely removed from indignities and disturbances: so should it be with our souls, and their corrupt affections. But though, as Christians, we are thus to strive to be buried to the world, it is *with whom*?

All. With Christ.

Miss W. Then being with *Him*, 'though we are dead, yet shall we live.' What do we say in the Easter Anthem about this?

George. 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be *dead* indeed unto sin, but *alive* unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' (Rom. vi. 11.)

Miss W. And in the Collect we go on to pray that through—?

'The grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection,' repeated the boys.

Miss W. In order, then, that we may enter into life, we must first be baptized into—what?

‘The death of Christ,’ said David.

‘What must we, then, continually do,’ proceeded *Miss Walton*, ‘as we pass through this world?’

Fred. Mortify our corrupt affections.

Miss W. Yes, and so be—?

‘Buried with Christ,’ they continued.

‘And this death, and this burial, with Him,’ said *Miss Walton*, ‘will lead us to life. Look at Romans, vi. 8.’

James. ‘Now, if we be *dead* with Christ, we believe that we *shall also live with Him.*’

Miss W. Yes, boys, but unless we are dead and buried with Him, we cannot live with Him. For (as we read in the service for the Visitation of the Sick), ‘He Himself went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain; He entered not into His glory before He was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ that we may rise again from death, and dwell with Him in everlasting life.’ It is *through* the grave and gate of *death* we must pass to life. Now, what did you pray that you might be able to do, at the beginning of Lent?

Several. To use such abstinence that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we might obey the motions of God.

Miss W. Yes; now, if we have been striving to do this, what have we been mortifying?

Edward. Our corrupt affections.

Miss W. But are we to give up our work now that Lent is over?

Alfred. No, we are to be buried with Christ ‘by *continual* mortifying our corrupt affections.’

Miss W. Through Lent we ought to have been crucifying all that is evil within us, but now that

Easter has come, we must finish our work by *completely burying* every corrupt affection—where?

Several. In the grave of Christ.

Miss W. Then if our corrupt affections are buried, shall we love what is evil, or hate what is good, shall we be ashamed of what is right, or hope for what is wrong?

‘No, ma’am,’ they all replied.

Miss W. No, by being buried in the grave of Christ, we shall be shut out from evil influence. Evil will not approach to harm us. Now, if we have made a right use of Lent, this will in a measure have taken place. It is, alas! only in a measure, and we must *continue* to *make dead* what corrupt affections still remain. When will they be quite dead?

‘Not while we are in this world,’ said Edward.

‘When we are in heaven,’ said Charley.

Miss W. Yes, when we are in heaven, if we reach it; and in the meanwhile we must be daily striving to fit ourselves for it. Now we have hitherto taken the words ‘pass through the grave and gate of death’ figuratively: but have we not really to pass through?

All. Yes, ma’am, when our bodies die.

Miss W. And after they are dead, where will they be laid?

All. In the grave.

Miss W. Yes, but if we are really members of the body of Christ, shall we be alone in the grave?

Alfred. No, Christ will be with us.

Miss W. And shall we remain in the grave?

Francis. No, we *pass through* the grave to the resurrection.

Miss W. The grave, then, is not our final resting-place, it is but a passage. What is death compared to in the Collect?

Several. A gate.

Miss W. What is it the gate of?

Edward. Eternal life.

Miss W. And how is it that we know the grave to be but a passage, and death to be but the gate of life?

Alfred. Because our Saviour died and was buried, and rose again.

Miss W. Then the grave is not a dark and hopeless place to Christians, as it is to heathens?

Edward. No, because we know that we shall rise again.

Miss W. He who lay in the grave, as it were, to-day, has taken away the bitterness of death, by rising again; He has taken away the darkness and gloominess of the grave, because He passed through it before us; and will not leave us alone, even in the tomb, if we are buried *with Him* by having mortified our corrupt affections, and, by setting them on things above, have made them pure again. What sort of resurrection do we pray we may pass to?

All. A joyful resurrection.

Miss W. Will the resurrection be joyful to all?

Charles. No, not to the wicked.

Miss W. To whom will it be joyful?

Edward. To those who are buried with Christ.

Miss W. And for whose sake will it be joyful even to them?

Several. For Jesus Christ's sake.

Miss W. Yea, for His sake who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, we may, by continual mortifying our corrupt affections, be buried with Him, and pass with Him, through the grave and gate of death to a joyful resurrection. But to obtain this resurrection of joy, love, you must leave all hatred and anger, all selfishness and love of evil, all false shame, all fear of men, all evil affections, and be buried with Christ.

When Miss W. had finished expressing her

boys, there was still some time to spare before church.

‘Is not Mr Warble coming to tell us some more of his dream?’ asked Charley.

‘I dare say he will; I will go and see,’ said Miss Walton.

In a few moments she returned, followed by Mr Warble.

‘I am glad to see that you are all able to come for a lesson even on this busy night,’ he said. ‘I think you deserve a story, and the part of my dream which follows will, I hope, supply you with some thoughts suitable for the day.’ Having said this, he continued his narrative:—

THE OLD MAN’S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

(Continued.)

DURING the long hours of the night, many were the anxious watchers round little Angelo’s bed of sickness; and as he lay in a long, death-like trance, Pastor knelt and prayed for him, while Stephen and others were using what means they could for his restoration. His countenance was calm and beautiful as he lay; and, every now and then, it almost seemed as if he smiled; and yet it was not so, for his lips moved not, and his eyes were closed.

For a while Courage was quite overcome with grief; but as he gazed on the still, peaceful form of his friend, and listened to Pastor’s words of comfort, his grief subsided.

‘We must not grieve for Angelo,’ said Pastor, ‘for he is going, Courage, to a better and happier home. The Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep, will not suffer His little lamb to be lost, but will take him to Himself, and give him a crown of glory that fadeth not away.’

‘No, I will not grieve for him, for I am sure he

will go to the Rest of the Island Home. He was always good and gentle. I was thinking how lonely I should be without him,' replied Courage; 'but now I will try and think of his happiness. See how beautiful he looks even now,' he said, gazing upon Angelo. 'His hand is grasping his cross, which he has ever kept pure and bright, since the day it was given to him.'

'Yes,' answered Pastor, 'willingly and cheerfully he has ever obeyed, manfully he has fought against every enemy, and faithfully has he discharged all his duties; and now, for the sake of his suffering Master, he is going home to receive his reward. And though he has to pass through the grave, and to bear the pains of death, Courage, the grave will be the passage to glory, and death the gate of life; therefore we will not sorrow for him, but rather rejoice that his reward is so near.' With such words as these, Pastor comforted Courage, and those who stood around watching the unconscious child.

For some time all had been silent, their minds being occupied by the thoughts which such a scene naturally suggested, when Angelo, slowly opening his eyes, gazed all around, and then fixing them, with a loving expression, upon Courage, who sat supporting his head, whispered—'I am going home, Courage. The Good Shepherd has called me. I have seen Him; and He said, "Fear not, lamb of my flock, for it is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."'

'But will you go soon, very soon?' asked Courage, striving to be calm, though I noticed his voice quivered as he spoke.

'I think I shall go soon; I am faint, Courage, and everything looks dim. Where is Pastor?' was Angelo's reply.

'I am here,' answered Pastor, taking the hand of the dying child, and kneeling down by his side.

‘I am glad you are near,’ returned Angelo; ‘must I lie in the cold grave, Pastor? Will all be quite dark soon?’

‘Yes, Angelo,’ replied Pastor, in a tone of gentle kindness, ‘but it is your Father who calls you. The grave will not be dark, dear one, for your Shepherd has passed through before you, and beyond the grave there is a home of glory.’

‘Yes, yes, I know,’ said Angelo; ‘but I am not fit for that home of glory. I have often been naughty; yes, I remember, now, how very often,’ and, as he spoke these words, he laid his head on Pastor’s shoulder and wept.

Methought, as I stood by listening, how strange this was. Pastor and Courage spoke of his goodness, but he himself of his faults. Then there returned into my mind these words, which I had heard read in the house of prayer a few hours before: ‘The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit;’ and then I knew that God was nigh that little child, who, while others thought well of him, was himself humble and contrite.

While I mused on these things (continued old Mr Warble), I scarcely noticed the departure of all except Pastor, or heard Angelo’s whispered confession, as, in a low tone, he told to him all the faults that weighed upon his mind; but my attention was roused by Pastor’s voice, as he stood over the child, who lay with his hands clasped, and his eyes shut, declaring that there was pardon for the penitent believing child—that his iniquity was forgiven, and his sin covered by the Father of all, for the sake of the Good Shepherd, who had given his life for the sheep.

And presently I saw that there was provided food for all those who travel to the far-off land, for Guido entered the room, and brought in bread and

wine, which, after prayers, and laying on of hands, was given with solemn words to the dying child. It was, Pastor said, unearthly food, provided by the Good Shepherd for all his faithful sheep, and Angelo ate thereof, and his soul was thereby strengthened and refreshed; and I saw that his face brightened, and his tears passed away, and when Pastor ceased his words of prayer, and had committed the dear child to the protection of his Unseen Father, in a sweet, angel-like voice, Angelo chanted—

‘The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing. He hath fed me in a green pasture, and led me beside the waters of comfort. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid? I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh even from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth,’ and he stretched out his hands, as though he saw a messenger waiting for him.

Again we, and those who had returned to the room, gathered round his bed, but he seemed to be already in spirit gone to his better home, and he noticed none of us. I could see, in my dream, that the breast of Courage heaved, and every now and then a tear stole down his cheeks, but he uttered no sounds of grief as he watched his departing friend.

At length he spoke. ‘Angelo,’ he said, ‘speak to me once more.’

Instantly Angelo’s attention was roused; he opened his beautiful eyes, and fixed them with a loving gaze on the face of Courage; then, stretching out his arms, he clasped them round his friend’s neck, and said, in a scarcely audible voice, ‘Courage, dear, gentle Courage, I leave you not for long. You will come quickly after me. We are children of one family, members of one body, lambs of one fold. Good-bye, Pastor, Courage—each one of you. Very,

very soon we shall meet again, but now, for a little while, I leave you. Hark!' he said, starting up as though he would fly away, 'do you not hear the distant music? The angels are calling me. I come! I come quickly! Holy Shepherd, receive thy little lamb for Thine own sake.'

The effort of saying this was too great for him, and he fell gently back into the arms of his friend, and lo! his spirit had fled to its home in glory.

Then I thought in my dream, that I too, heard a sweet murmuring sound, as of distant song, mingled with a sound as of fluttering wings, and a bright light shone for an instant in the chamber of death, and then all was still.

Not many days after, his frail body was laid in the holy ground, which surrounded the taper-spired building, and his cross of pearls was laid with him, his white garment, and his blood-red belt; and I saw that there was no more grief shown even by Courage, for the words Pastor spoke over the grave were words of hope. He spoke of the glorious resurrection to which the grave was the passage; he spoke of a beautiful home, of which death was the gate. He said that those who died faithful to their Shepherd, were blessed, for they rested from their labours; and he offered up thanksgiving to the Father above for His great mercy in taking Angelo to Himself, while he prayed Him shortly to accomplish the number of His elect, and to hasten His kingdom, and to grant that they, with all those who had departed in the true faith of His Holy Name, might have perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in eternal and everlasting glory.



STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;
OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Easter-Sunday.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who through Thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life ; We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us, Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

A JOYFUL day was Easter-Sunday to the Forley children, especially to those who had been endeavouring during the grave season of Lent to subdue their corrupt affections ; and had been through the deep sad solemnity of Passion Week and Good Friday in thought with their suffering Lord. For now that Easter had really come, their spirits rose with overflowing gladness.

Bright, indeed, the morning dawned, and few there were of the children who did not see the early break of day. They expected to be far too happy to waste the fresh hours of the morning in their beds. Besides, they wanted to gather violets and primroses to adorn the school-room, and to give to Mr and Miss Walton. At an early hour, therefore, you might have seen numbers of boys and girls, with joyous happy faces, seeking for these treasures of the early spring, or returning in groups laden with a rich harvest. The adorning of the school-room was entirely an idea of their own, and a secret from Mr and Miss

Walton. Miss Tule (the school-mistress) had kindly entered into their wishes, and before eight o'clock she was down at the school, to help the children in their arrangements.

Many hands made light work, and it was not long before pretty little wreaths of primroses and violets (with what few other flowers might be found at that early season) were made, and hung in different parts of the room. On the East wall there was a picture representing our blessed Lord after His resurrection, with Mary kneeling at His feet, and saying, 'Rabboni, which is to say, Master,' and this picture they more especially adorned with choice festoons, and bunches of flowers at the corners.

When the school-room was finished to the satisfaction of the children, they proceeded up to Mr Walton's house to offer the violets which had been set apart for him and his sister.

When Miss Walton heard of the numbers of children who were asking for them, she put on her bonnet, and went with her brother into the garden, to receive their offering.

As soon as they appeared in sight, the beautiful Easter Hymn,

'Jesus Christ is risen to-day,' &c.

burst from the lips of the children of the choir, who stood together in a row, while the joyful hallelujahs were joined in by the whole group. It was a beautiful sight to see such a goodly band of children (the boys having reverently taken off their hats) standing under the bright blue sky, thus singing the praises of their risen Lord, while their sweet clear voices seemed to ascend to the very heavens.

'Thank you, dear children,' said Mr Walton, when the psalm of praise was ended, 'thank you, for such a primitive greeting. The early Christians' salutation on Easter morn was, "The Lord is risen;"

and you have had a mind to follow their good example.'

'Please, sir, Miss Tule told us about it,' replied several, 'and she said we might sing.'

'Oh, yes, we may sing now,' cried Charley, 'for Easter has come. How glad I am that it is really here.'

'Indeed,' said Miss Walton, 'I hope you will all sing with your whole hearts to-day, the greatest festival in the year. You will have plenty of opportunity in Church.'

There was always more singing than usual on Easter-day at Forley, for in addition to the canticles, the psalms were chanted, and an anthem sung in the appointed place, the children really enjoying the singing.

When Miss Walton stopped speaking, the children came forward and offered their bunches of violets, so many, that Mr and Miss Walton said they could hardly hold them all.

'They are very beautiful, and very sweet,' said Mr Walton; 'but tell me, children, where were they through the long cold winter months?'

'Please, sir, they were not out,' replied the group.

'No,' continued Mr Walton, 'they were not out; but the germ, as it is called, of the flower was hidden in the plant, ready to burst out at the right season. Was it not?'

'I suppose so,' was the whispered answer from several of the children.

'But,' said Mr Walton again, 'if you had looked at the plant in winter, would you have found anything like this beautiful sweet flower?'

'No,' said Alfred; 'but the root in the ground is alive, and when the warm weather comes, then the leaves and flowers burst out from it.'

'And what does this put you in mind of, children?' asked Mr Walton.

'I think I know,' whispered Charley, who was

standing by Miss Walton's side. 'Doesn't he mean that it is like the resurrection?'

Miss Walton repeated what Charley had said, and her brother continued, 'Yes, you are right, Charley; our bodies in the grave are like flowers in the winter, they lie hidden, and apparently dead; but at the resurrection they will rise again to new life. What does the violet plant come from?'

'A seed,' replied a number in one voice.

'And the seed,' said Mr Walton, 'is put into the ground and dies; but what comes from it?'

'The plant and the beautiful flower,' they answered again.

'But is not the flower far more beautiful than the seed?' asked Mr Walton.

'Oh, yes,' cried the children, 'the seed is not beautiful, the flower is quite different.'

'And what do you read about the resurrection of the dead like this?' inquired Mr Walton.

'"It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;"' repeated Rose Lunn; '"it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."' (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.)

'That is right, Rose,' continued Mr Walton. 'We must think of this when we look at the beautiful flowers of spring bursting into new life, and then they will teach us a good lesson, and be meet emblems for to-day, when our blessed Lord, who is the first-fruits of them that slept, rose glorious from the grave.'

The children now begged both Mr and Miss Walton to go down with them to the school, and although they did not know what made them so anxious about it, they gratified them, and went.

The praises they bestowed upon their decorations quite satisfied the children, and the favourite picture was duly admired; and then it was found that the

hour for opening school had passed during the examination of the room. However, Miss Walton did not mind this irregularity for once, and allowed it to be fully half-past nine before she began the lesson with the boys.

‘In the Collect, who do you say overcame death?’ asked Miss Walton.

Several. Almighty God,

Miss W. Through whom?

Francis. His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Miss W. That is, in the person of Christ. In St. Athanasius’s Creed, which we say to-day, what are we taught is the right faith about our Lord Jesus Christ?

George. ‘For the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is *God and man.*’

Miss W. ‘Perfect *God* and perfect man. . . . Yet He is not two, but’—?

‘One Christ,’ continued several.

Miss W. And afterwards we say, that God and man, as one Christ did—what for us?

Several. ‘Suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, *rose again the third day from the dead.*’

‘Therefore in the Collect we say,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘that God overcame death, through, or’—?

‘In the person of Christ,’ said Edward.

Miss W. But *how* was it that death was overcome?

Alfred. By our Saviour rising again.

Miss W. When He gave up the ghost upon the cross, it almost seemed as if death had overcome Him; but when He rose again, then *He* overcame death. What does St. Peter say about this in his sermon on the day of Pentecost—the lesson for this afternoon?

David. ‘Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom

God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.' (Acts, ii. 23, 24.)

Miss W. Death could not hold Him, therefore He rose, and by rising did—what?

Several. Overcame death.

Miss W. But had no other person ever been raised from the dead?

Samuel. Yes, Lazarus. (St. John, xi. 44.)

'And the widow of Nain's son, and the daughter of Jairus,' said George. (St. Luke, vii. 15; viii. 55.)

Miss W. Even in the Old Testament are we not told of resurrections from the dead?

Edward. Yes, Elijah raised the son of the widow of Zarephath. (1. Kings, xvii. 22.)

Miss W. But could it be said of these persons that they overcame death?

Edward. No; because they would all die again.

Miss W. Exactly; the most that could be said was that death was postponed, not overcome, for Lazarus, and the widow's son, and all, would die again; but is it so with our Saviour?

Several. No; 'Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over Him.'

Miss W. Death had, then, dominion once?

Charley. Yes, for the three days when He lay in the grave.

Miss W. But at the end of the three days, what did He do?

All. Overcame death by rising again.

Miss W. And there is another reason why you could not say that death was overcome by those persons you mentioned. Had they any power to raise themselves?

Fred. No; they were raised by the power of God.

Miss W. And that power was not in themselves; but how was it with our blessed Saviour? Look at St. John, v. 26.

George. 'As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.'

Miss W. Yes; and when Jesus spoke to the Jews about having power to lay down His life, what did He say, again?

Several. 'I have power to lay it down, and *I have power to take it again.*' (St. John, x. 18.)

Miss W. And what did He say about destroying the temple?

Edward. 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . . But He spake of the temple of His body.' (St. John, ii. 19-21.)

Miss W. It was, then, by His own Divine Power that He rose from the dead. What did He thus show Himself to be stronger than?

'Death,' said all the boys.

'But does it not often say in the Bible, that God, meaning the Father, raised Him from the dead?' asked Edward.

Miss W. Yes, Edward; but we must remember that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are all One: Three Persons in one God; and every Person in the holy and undivided Trinity co-operates in whatever is said to be done by One. The Son rose again in His own power, according to the will of His heavenly Father, and through the energy of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. It was in submission to the will of His Father that Christ had died; and now that He rose again in accordance with that will, it might be said, either that God raised Him from the dead, or that He rose again from the dead. Do you understand me?

'Yes, thank you, ma'am,' he replied.

Miss W. By the death and resurrection of our Saviour, the curse that God pronounced against the devil, after he had tempted man, was fulfilled—what was it?

Francis. 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall

bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.' (Gen. iii. 15.)

Miss W. When was the serpent's head bruised?

Edward. When death was overcome.

Miss W. What was then opened?

All. The gate of everlasting life.

Miss W. And how can it be said that our Saviour opened that gate?

Edward. Because He passed through death to the resurrection.

Miss W. And for whom has the gate been opened?

Charley. For us. 'He has opened unto *us* the gate of everlasting life.'

Miss W. Or, as the anthem says—?

'Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die; *even so in Christ shall all be made alive,*' the boys repeated.

Miss W. And does the Epistle also teach us the same? 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear'—?

'Then shall *ye also appear* with Him in glory,' continued Andrew.

Miss W. Once more look at 1 Cor. xv. 23.

Edgar. 'But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; *afterward they that are Christ's* at His coming.'

Miss W. For these good things, boys, we must rejoice. How does St. Paul finish his account of the resurrection in 1 Cor. xv.?

Several. 'But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (ver. 57.)

Miss W. When does the Church especially bid us rejoice?

All. To-day.

Miss W. And why to-day?

James. Because our Saviour rose to-day.

Miss W. Yes; on the first day of the week He

rose. What, therefore, do we always do on the first day?

All. Keep it holy.

Miss W. As a day of joy or sorrow?

‘Joy,’ they all replied.

Miss W. Yes, every Sunday is a festival, or day of rejoicing; but on Easter-day we must more especially rejoice, because the Church commemorates it as the very day of the resurrection. I will read you some beautiful verses about this:—

‘Oh! day of days! shall hearts set free
No “minstrel rapture” find for thee?
Thou art the Sun of other days,
They shine by *giving* back thy rays:

‘Enthroned in thy sovereign sphere
Thou shedd’st thy light on all the year;
Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter-Day in every week:

‘And week-days, following in their train,
The fulness of thy blessing gain,
Till all, both resting and employ,
Be one Lord’s day of holy joy.’*

‘Please, ma’am, I should like to learn those pretty lines,’ said Francis.

‘You shall learn them if you like,’ said Miss Walton. ‘Now, if this is our greatest Festival, tell me what feast the Church provides?’

‘The feast of the Holy Communion,’ said several.

Miss W. And for what do we say we are chiefly bound to praise God in the preface for to-day in the Communion service?

Edward. ‘But chiefly are we bound to praise Thee for the glorious resurrection of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: for He is the very Paschal Lamb which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by His death hath destroyed

* ‘Christian Year,’ Easter-Day.

death, and by His rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life.'

Miss W. And can you tell me, Edward, why the feast of the Holy Communion is so especially suited for to-day?

'Because whoso eateth the flesh of the Son of Man, and drinketh His blood, hath everlasting *life*,' he replied. (See St. John, vi. 54.)

Miss W. Yes, to-day life was obtained for us, therefore to-day we eat of that Feast whereby it is principally conveyed to us. Life is ready for us, and we, as it were, have but to stretch out our hands and take it. And for you, boys, who are not old enough for this sacred feast, Easter also is a day of joy, for having been made one with Christ at your Baptism, you are partakers of His resurrection, and may pass through the gate of death with Him, to a resurrection of glory, *unless by your own wilful sin you cut yourselves off from Him.*

'I have not time to go on with the Collect to-day,' continued Miss Walton, looking at the clock, 'we were so late in beginning our lesson. We can go on with it on Easter-Monday and Tuesday, if you will come up in the evening for a lesson.'

'That's right,' cried the boys; 'and please, ma'am, will Mr Warble tell us more of his dream to-day?'

'Yes,' Miss Walton replied, 'I dare say he will, and perhaps to-morrow and next day also.'

'But please, ma'am,' said Fred, 'may we not have a walk this afternoon? the day is so beautiful.'

'Oh! do say yes,' cried Charley, Alfred, and some others.

'I will ask Mr Walton, and you shall know after Church,' replied Miss Walton; 'I dare say he will not refuse, if he is not too tired.'

'I hope, then, he won't be too tired,' was Charley's whispered rejoinder.

'Is that your only reason for hoping so?' said Miss

Walton, laughing. 'Oh, Charley, Charley! And now,' she continued, 'we must start for Church; do not be thinking of your walk during service.'

If my readers remember Edward's hopes for to-day, they will be glad to hear that they were not disappointed, but that he had the unspeakable privilege of kneeling for his first communion at the altar of God. It was indeed a rich feast for him, and we trust for all who that day received with humble thankfulness this great gift of life. It was an Easter-day that we think *he* would never forget, but rather look back upon as a bright day in his spiritual life.

Charley had his wish, for Mr Walton was not tired; so after the morning service as many of the children as liked took a short ramble with him, his sister, and old Mr Warble. Edward chose rather to be alone, and he chose wisely, for it was well that he should alone, in his closet, think seriously over the solemn duty which he had, for the first time, just performed, and there renew his resolutions. But the others had no such motive for not sharing in this innocent enjoyment, and therefore all the rest of the boys accompanied them. The bright sunshine, the soft breeze, and the sweet flowers, made the walk most charming, and naturally led their thoughts to Him who has given us so much to enjoy. Nor did the walk rob the boys of their story, as there was time for it after they had returned from their ramble, when Edward joined them, and they all proceeded to Mr Walton's house. Mr Warble was soon seated among them, and went on with his dream.

THE OLD MAN'S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

(Continued.)

So I saw in my dream (said Mr Warble) that a few days after little Angelo's body was laid in the grave of hope, a joyful festival broke in upon the usual labours of the children—no lesson, no work, was to be done on this day of joy, but as soon as the

hour of morning prayer and praise was over, the children were allowed to amuse themselves as best they liked, only they were reminded by Pastor that even in their amusements they were to remember their Unseen Father, and to be very careful to do nothing which would displease Him. They were to be kind and gentle towards each other, temperate even in play ; and to be especially watchful lest their old master should come upon them, and find them unprepared to resist him on this day of liberty. 'One command, children, I have to give you,' said Pastor ; 'you must none of you enter the many little boats, which are moored on the shore, to-day. You are welcome to go there and play, only remember this my command ;' and having said this, he gave his blessing to the children, when they ran joyfully to their several amusements.

Many were the consultations held, of what they should do, and where they should go, and how they could best spend their time ; and even while I listened to this, I saw that there was need of Pastor's warning, for some seemed bent on gratifying their own wishes without any regard to others ; some lost their tempers in the argument, and spoke angry words ; whilst others there were who, forgetting themselves entirely, strove only to please their companions ; and they were gentle in their arguments, and patient when angry words were spoken ; and these I felt sure were pleasing their Father above ; but the others, I feared, were making Him angry. While I noticed these things, I determined to follow Courage and the children that were under his care, for I found some few of the elder boys were intrusted with a certain number of children, to direct their amusements, and keep guard over them. Among the number under the guardianship of Courage, were all the children whom I had especially noticed, Timid, Slothful, Wayward, and little Innocence, along with many others.

‘Let us go,’ said Courage, ‘to the mountains, where we can gather flowers, and make crowns and garlands to dress up little Innocence as Queen of the day.’

‘Oh, yes!’ cried several, ‘let’s go there;’ while Innocence herself looked up in the face of Courage, and said, gently, ‘I should like it very much, do let us go.’ But all were not agreed. ‘No,’ cried Wayward, ‘I want to go to the shore; I want to gather stones and shells for a rockery, and so does Slothful; and don’t you, Timid?’ he asked.

Timid looked as if he did not quite know what to say, as if he would rather do what Courage suggested, and yet was afraid to oppose Wayward. At length he replied, ‘I don’t know.’

‘There it is,’ cried Slothful; ‘why can’t you say one thing or another? you must make a choice.’

‘He daren’t,’ whispered Wayward, but loud enough for Timid to hear him.

Again the poor child looked perplexed, and then said, with an uncertain glance towards Courage, ‘Well! I will choose the shore, then,’ and several others did the same.

‘We must not spend all our time in this way,’ said Courage, ‘which party will give up to the other? I do not care what we do.’

‘Never mind the mountains and the flowers, we can go to the shore,’ said Innocence immediately, and some followed her good example cheerfully; some with a low murmur of discontent; while a few were for holding to their own wishes in spite of everything.

But Courage now settled it for them: ‘The greater number have decided for the shore,’ he said, ‘and therefore we must go there; perhaps we can go to the mountains afterwards; but be sure you remember Pastor’s command, and do not even go near the boats.’

I saw that Wayward’s lip curled in derision as

Courage said this, but he was too well pleased with having gained his point to *say* anything. He therefore ran off, and was followed by the rest, Courage taking the hand of Innocence on one side, and Timid's on the other.

As soon as they had reached the shore, and had somewhat regained their breath, I saw Courage draw Timid gently to one side, saying, 'Timid, will you stay near me to-day? I think you will be happier.'

'O yes! I should like it so much,' the boy replied, 'but I am afraid of Wayward, I never dare contradict him. I am so sorry I did not choose the mountains.'

'Never mind that,' said Courage, 'it was a matter of no consequence; but do not yield to him when he tries to lead you to do wrong. I see you are frightened of him, and therefore I want you to stay away from him. You know you can do that if you like. Do not be afraid of doing right,' he said, earnestly.

'I will try not to be,' replied Timid, but it was in a desponding voice.

'Why do you speak so sadly?' continued Courage; 'only make up your mind bravely to try; and keep away from those who lead you to do wrong, and ask our Father to help you (you know you have not to fight alone,' he said, reverently), 'and then I am sure you will always do right.'

'Do you really think so, Courage?' asked Timid, his face brightening; 'then I will indeed try.'

'Come, then,' returned Courage, 'we are going to gather shells, and we will make a crown of them, and Innocence shall yet be Queen of the day. You will come, won't you?'

'Yes, I will follow in one minute,' replied Timid, and so he did; but not until he had asked for the *Holy Comforter* to strengthen him, and to give him

power to choose the right; then he joined the happy group which surrounded Courage, as they talked, and laughed, and sang, by turns, while they gathered the many beautiful shells which lay scattered along the beach. I thought I never saw Timid so happy, and something seemed to tell me the reason why.

Sometimes the children approached close to the water's edge in their search for shells, regardless of the waves which broke upon the shore, and they would run back with a merry laugh as the water dashed them higher and higher. The tide was rising, and they knew that the waves would soon be over the sands where the shells were most abundant. For long time I saw that Wayward and Slothful kept far the rest, seeming to share in the common happiness and good temper.

At length Courage said he thought they had gathered enough, and proposed that they should make a crown and necklace. He then seated himself upon the beach, beyond the reach of the waves, surrounded by many of the children, who began to thread the shells, which were thin enough to be easily pierced. The smaller ones were threaded for necklace, and the larger ones for a crown.

'I'm not going to sit down yet,' cried Wayward. 'I want to go round that point; there are the beautiful shells there. Timid, come along with

Timid turned pale at being thus addressed, but he speeded his cross and found heart to reply, 'No, I am going with Courage,' and at the same moment I felt in my dream that Courage called him, and Timid obeyed the call, running quickly up to the top, and sitting down close by Courage, as though he felt *that* to be the only safe place for him.

'I shan't go any further, I am tired,' cried Slothful, throwing himself upon the beach; 'I shall go to sleep.'

‘Very well! we can do without you. You never finish any thing you begin,’ returned Wayward, pursuing his way, followed by some three or four boys.

I saw that Courage, as he sat, kept an anxious eye upon Wayward, though he never opposed him except when he was obliged; he also spoke to Slothful, telling him he had better not sleep, for Pastor did not like them to do so, and inviting him to join them in their amusement: but Slothful replied that Pastor would know nothing about it, and that, perhaps, he shouldn’t go to sleep, but he would lie still for a little while at all events, for he was tired.

The happy group round Courage continued their work, which was soon completed; and then I saw in my dream that they set Innocence upon a rock, and put the crown upon her head, and the necklace round her neck, and called her the Queen, and danced about her. But one little girl looked sad and fretful, and then I heard her whisper, ‘I should like the crown. Why is Innocence to have it?’

Then I saw that Innocence had caught the sound of her words, and she jumped from the rock on which she stood, and, running up to the little girl, she took off the crown and quickly placed it on Bellina’s head, and was proceeding to do the same with the necklace, when the little girl stopped her, being ashamed when she saw how unselfishly Innocence acted, and becoming conscious that her feelings were wrong, and that envy was hateful in the eye of their Unseen Father.

‘No, Innocence,’ she said, ‘you shall not put them upon me. I was envious of you, and it was very wrong. I am not good enough for a crown. I will not wear it;’ and she took it from her own head and replaced it on Innocence’s. But I saw that *she* did not look happy and proud of it as she had done before, and I heard her whisper to Courage, ‘Take the crown off me, Courage; if Bellina is not good enough for it, I am sure I am not.’

He did not think so, yet he took the ornaments off her when she asked him, and he said that they would keep them for Content, the little babe who had so lately been admitted among them.

Then I heard Innocence say to herself, as she walked up and down at some distance from the rest, 'There is a crown for those who are faithful unto death. Oh! may I be found worthy of it! Make me faithful, oh our Father, unto the end, and then give me a crown of glory, for the sake of Him who died, and was buried, and rose again, and who is now with Thee in Thy kingdom.'

Soon afterwards she joined the party again, who were just starting to walk round the headland which Wayward had pointed out, and had now reached. Courage wished to follow him, and therefore roused Slothful (who, notwithstanding the warning he had received, had dropped asleep), that he might accompany them, and in a few moments the whole party were proceeding merrily along.

'Now, boys!' said old Mr Warble, 'I have told you enough to-day, don't you think I have?'

'Oh! no, sir,' cried several, 'we should never be tired of listening to your stories. Please, sir, are you tired?'

'To say the truth, I am,' he answered. 'I am not quite as young as you, Alfred, and my walk to-day has tired me. I shall be rested to-morrow, and, if all be well, I will then go on with my Dream.'

'Thank you, sir,' replied the boys, and immediately began to prepare for going.

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STORIES AND CATECHISINGS
IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS ;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Monday in Easter-Week.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who through Thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life ; We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

‘WILL you have your lesson or the story first?’ asked Miss Walton, when all the boys were assembled on Monday evening after service.

Some of them cried out the story, others the lesson.

‘I am no forwarder,’ said Miss Walton, smiling. ‘You are not agreed, you are like the children of the Island. Let me hear the reasons for your choices.’

‘Please, ma’am, we want the story first, because we like it best,’ replied Edgar, speaking for those who had made this choice.

‘And why do you choose the lesson first?’ asked Miss Walton of the others.

One or two answered, ‘Because we can’t help thinking of the story while we are at our lesson, if we hear it first ;’ while others replied, ‘Because we like the best last.’

‘Well ! I see I shall have to decide for you,’ said Miss Walton ; ‘won’t that be best?’

‘Yes, please, ma’am,’ they all answered.

‘Then I,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘say the lesson first, as I think the reason that Andrew and Edward gave, and those who spoke with them, a good and sufficient reason for wishing for it. You should all try to give your whole attention to your lesson, and if the story diverts your thoughts from it, I think it had better come after the lesson.’

In this they all acquiesced, although I cannot say that none were disappointed. A cloud rested on Edgar’s countenance, but it soon passed away again, and he as well as the rest endeavoured to give his full attention to his lesson.

‘We will take the petition part of the Collect this evening,’ said Miss Walton; ‘which is it?’

Several. ‘We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect.’

Miss W. What does ‘preventing’ mean?

Samuel. Hindering.

Miss W. Look at the Collect, and see if it *can* mean ‘hindering’ here.

The boys looked, and Edward and others replied, ‘No, ma’am, it can’t mean hindering.’

Miss W. And do none of you know what it does mean?

‘Oh yes, I remember,’ said Alfred. ‘Going before.’

Miss W. That is right, Alfred. Do you not remember that in another Collect, which Mr Walton constantly says before his sermon, *prevent* is used with the same meaning?

‘Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings,’ &c., said several.

Miss W. Yes, ‘prevent us,’ or, ‘go before us, O Lord, in all our doings.’ You must try and remember this meaning of the word ‘prevent,’ or you will find it impossible to understand several of the

Collects. What do we say prevents us, in to-day's Collect?

Several. God's 'special grace.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'special?'

Francis. Particular.

Miss W. What does God by His 'special grace' put into our minds?

All. 'Good desires.'

Miss W. Then good desires do not come from ourselves?

George. No, from our own hearts 'proceed evil thoughts,' &c. (St. Matt. xv. 19.)

Miss W. From whom, then, do good desires come?

Several. From God.

Miss W. Do you remember what the wise man says about the preparations of the heart?

Edward. 'The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.' (Prov. xvi. 1.)

Miss W. Can you give me any other texts which teach us that good desires come from God?

Francis. 'For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.' (Phil. ii. 13.)

George. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.' (St. James, i. 17.)

Miss W. Good desires, then, come from God, and they are put into our minds by—what?

Fred. His 'special grace preventing us.'

Miss W. We have an example of this in one of St. Paul's converts. Who are we especially told attended to his preaching at Philippi?

George. Lydia.

Miss W. How came she to attend?

Samuel. God opened her heart.

Miss W. First came the desire to hear St. Paul's preaching, without her knowing, perhaps, that it was a good desire, and then what followed?

Edward. God opened her heart, 'that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.' (Acts, xvi. 14.)

Miss W. He opened, or inclined her heart to attend. His special grace prevented her. How did she prove that she attended to St. Paul's preaching?

James. She was baptized and her household.

Miss W. The grace of God, then, preventing us, and putting into our minds good desires; do we need no more?

Edward. We want His 'continual help' to 'bring the same to good effect.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'the same'?

Charley. The good desires.

Miss W. The good desires, then, come from—whom?

'They come from God,' the boys answered again.

Miss W. And the power to bring them to good effect—?

'It also comes from God,' said Francis.

Miss W. Is it sufficient, then, for God to help us sometimes?

Several. No, He must help us continually.

Miss W. Yes; therefore what do we pray?

All. That by His '*continual help*' we may bring the same to good effect.

Miss W. Yes, day by day, hour by hour, we need God's help to walk in the right way. It is He that must, by His preventing grace, give us the desire to do right, and it is He who must give us continual help to bring the same to good effect. Is it, then, sufficient to pray occasionally?

'If we want continual help, we must pray for it continually,' said Edward.

Miss W. And why do we want continual help?

George. Because we are not able to do right of ourselves.

Miss W. From whom does David say help comes?

Alfred. 'My help cometh even from the Lord : who hath made heaven and earth.' (Ps. cxxi. 2.)

'Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord,' said Edward. (Ps. cxxiv. 7.)

Miss W. Yes, and without that help, what would happen?

George. 'If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say : if the Lord Himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us ; they had swallowed us up quick : when they were so wrathfully displeased at us.' (Ps. cxxiv. 1, 2.)

Miss W. When are our good desires brought to good effect?

'When we act upon them,' said Edward.

Miss W. That is quite right. Now those of us who have used Lent rightly, have used it as a time of penitence, and a time for making—what sort of resolutions?

'Good resolutions,' said Charley.

Miss W. But will good resolutions be sufficient by themselves?

Andrew. No, we must bring them to good effect.

Miss W. Yes ; now, when we are again, as it were, returning to the world after being engaged in more constant devotion, we must endeavour to act upon the good desires and the good resolutions, which may have been put into our hearts during Lent, and perhaps this is one reason why the Church puts this prayer into our mouths at Easter. If we are able to carry out our good desires, it is by whose help?

'By the help of God,' replied Alfred.

Miss W. And to receive this help, what must we do?

'Pray for it,' they all answered.

Miss W. Yes, and therefore the Church teaches us how to pray for it. She puts words into our mouths. Must we use them only with our mouths?

‘No, with our hearts also,’ replied Fred.

‘Yes,’ said Miss Walton, ‘and having prayed, we must then endeavour ourselves to act upon the good desires which God has by His grace put into our minds. Listen to me, boys,’ added Miss Walton, seriously: ‘I fear for you, now that the season of Lent is over, when some of you, I know, have been trying to be watchful and careful. I fear lest you should be satisfied with what you have done; be satisfied with good desires, and that you will now grow careless again, and lose what you have gained.’ The boys did not speak, and Miss Walton continued: ‘This is your danger, boys; will you guard against it?’

Edward, Charley, Alfred, and others, answered, ‘Yes, ma’am.’

‘If you feel it to be a danger, it will be a great help in saving you from it,’ said Miss Walton. ‘You must now endeavour, by your daily walk, to show that your increased services, and increased private devotions, have not been a mere form, but that you have used them rightly; and try to act upon the good desires, and the good resolutions, which God may have put into your hearts. Do not let them pass away, but pray earnestly and daily for continued help to bring them to good effect.’

Miss Walton, after giving the boys these few words of warning, left the room, to call her kind old friend to go on with his story to the boys.

‘How pleasant it is to listen to Mr Warble,’ said Fred. ‘He does look so kind while he is talking.’

‘I wonder whether he really dreamt all this,’ said Charley. ‘I wish I could dream such pretty dreams.’

‘It makes no difference to *us* whether he dreamt it or not, so long as he tells it to us,’ said Francis; ‘but, you know, I don’t think he did; I think he makes it as he goes along.’

‘That can’t surely be,’ cried a number at once.

‘What can’t surely be?’ asked old Mr Warble, who had entered unobserved.

None of the boys, however, had the courage to tell him what they were talking about, so he took his seat, and continued to tell his dream:—

THE OLD MAN’S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

(Continued.)

THE distance round the point was further than Courage had supposed, and it was with no easy mind that he now hurried after Wayward and his companions, fearing lest any evil should have happened to them during the few minutes they had been from under his eye. Not that it was his duty never to lose sight of them for a moment; but he knew how often Wayward did what was wrong, and how easily the others were led to follow his bad example, especially if there were no one near to guard or warn them against it. He therefore ran hastily forward, and on turning the point, looked anxiously round for the boys. They were all there but Wayward. Courage inquired immediately where he was.

‘Oh,’ said the boys, ‘he was here this minute talking to a man, then he walked away with him, saying he would be back directly.’

‘What sort of a man?’ asked Courage.

‘He was a tall man, dressed like a fisherman,’ the boys replied, ‘and he spoke kindly to us, and asked us if we would not like to have a sail upon the water to-day.’

‘Did you tell him that you were forbidden?’ inquired Courage.

‘We did not speak to him,’ the boys replied, ‘but Wayward did, and said that we should like to go very much, but that Pastor had forbidden us, and

then the man drew Wayward to one side, and they walked away together.'

'And did he wear a cross of pearls; had he on a blood-red belt?' asked Courage, anxiously.

Some answered that they did not know, they had not noticed; and then I saw that Courage looked grieved; but one little boy, who had not yet spoken, now came forward, and said, 'No, Courage, no, he wore no cross, but he had on a *black*, not a red belt, and I was frightened when I saw him, for I thought he must be a servant of our old master, but Wayward laughed at me, and would talk to him.'

When Courage heard this, I saw that he turned pale, and for a moment closed his eyes, and put his hands together, saying a few whispered words, and then he quickly asked, 'Which way did they go?'

'Towards yonder cavern,' answered Truthful (for that was the boy's name who had last spoken), and he pointed towards a large overhanging rock at some little distance.

'Stay here, then,' said Courage, 'until I return,' and, without a moment's hesitation, he ran quickly towards the spot which Truthful had pointed out. He had not, however, proceeded far, when Wayward and the fisherman came out of the cavern, and walked towards the group of boys. I saw in my dream that, for a moment, Wayward looked alarmed when he saw Courage, but the man whispered something to him, and his fears seemed to pass away.

They approached Courage, who now stood waiting for them, and, before he had time to speak, the fisherman said, 'Wayward tells me that I am to deliver my message to you, for that you have the charge of the children.'

'What message can you have for me?' asked Courage.

'A message from Pastor,' replied the man, 'to tell you that you may all go upon the water with me if

you like. He said I was to ask you if the children had been obedient, and kept away from the boats according to his command, for that if they had, they might go with me for an hour's sail.'

I saw that as he spoke Courage eyed him carefully, and then drawing himself up and looking full into the man's face, he answered, boldly, 'Pastor never sent you. Where is your cross of pearls? where is your blood-red belt? You are trying to deceive us; you are tempting us to disobey Pastor, and to sin against our Unseen Father. Leave us, for we will not go upon the water.'

For a moment I thought the man looked confused, but he recovered himself, and replied, 'Courage, you are quite right to ask me for my cross. I admire you for it, but I can soon explain all to you. I dressed in my fisher's clothes, and ran away in a hurry, and forgot to put it on again, after taking it off to change my clothes.'

By this time the children had gathered round. Timid looked pale, and trembled; Wayward was talking eagerly to Slothful and one or two others; little Innocence had taken the hand of Courage, and now whispered to him, 'Do not trust the fisherman. We will not go, Courage. "Resist him, and he will flee from you."'

Her words seemed to give fresh resolution to Courage, and once more he replied, 'Leave us; we will follow no one who comes without his cross, and wears not a blood-red belt. You are trying to deceive us, but we are not ignorant of your devices: we will obey Pastor's command, and not go upon the water.'

Then he turned and begged the children to come quickly away; but here again was another difficulty. Wayward refused to follow him. Whether Courage went with the fisherman or not, he said, he should go, and Slothful would go, for he had just promised, and Timid would go, he was quite sure. Many angry

words he spoke, accusing Courage of always putting difficulties in the way of any pleasure, and Pastor of being unkind and harsh in ever forbidding them to go near the boats; and he declared his resolution to have a sail, let the consequence be what it might. And I saw that the fisherman encouraged him in all he said, and persuaded Slothful, and others who were only too willing to listen, that Wayward was quite right, that there could be no harm in their going with him in spite of Courage, for that he was indeed a messenger from Pastor; and I saw that they did not prove him as Courage had done. Slothful said it was less trouble to go than to make all that fuss about refusing, so he should go; others said it would be very pleasant, and that Pastor could not blame *them*, when the man said he had come from him; and so one after another too many yielded, though still I was glad to see a band of faithful ones. I trembled when, once more, I saw Wayward turn to persuade Timid to accompany him, and begin to laugh at his fears. But Courage was at his side, and whispered, 'Timid, be brave, and refuse. Do not spend your strength only in wishing to do right: act quickly, before your fears prevail.'

His words seemed to take effect, and again I saw that Timid grasped his cross, and, though with a trembling voice, he replied, 'Wayward, press me no more, for I won't go with you. I will stay with Courage.'

Wayward turned away from him with a scornful laugh, but Timid heeded it not; his refusal had brought courage to his heart, and he wavered no more.

One attempt was made to induce Innocence to go, but her calm, steady reply, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against our Unseen Father?' made Wayward at once give up the endeavour.

It was in vain that Courage once more begged these erring boys to relinquish the idea, and reminded them how often they had been warned of the danger

of having anything to do with those who wore not the badge of the Island Home, and he tried to prove to them that the fisherman was no messenger from Pastor, begging of them at least to delay until he sent to inquire. Wayward opposed all that he said, and prevailed. There was but one child, of those determined upon the sail, who yielded again to Courage : the rest were willingly blinded.

And now the fisherman had launched his little bark ; beautiful and tempting it looked as it rode upon the waves. The sun was shining brightly ; a gentle breeze was blowing, just sufficient to fill the white sails, and the blue waters danced in the sunshine. I watched the countenances of the children who still remained with Courage, and many of them seemed to gaze with longing eyes. Others there were who trusted not themselves to look on the bright temptation, but turned away from the water, and fixed their eyes upon the blue sky above ; and then they glanced at their crosses, and remembered whose children they were, and that they must cheerfully take up their cross and follow the guidance of their Unseen Father, and so the temptation lost its power over them. Among this number was Timid.

And now you might hear the loud boisterous mirth of the boys, as they jumped one by one into the little boat. There were Slothful and Wayward, and several other boys ; and just as they were about to push from the shore, I saw that little Bellina, who had been gazing on the scene with longing eyes, so intently that she scarcely seemed to have heard all that Courage had said, now stretched out her arms towards Wayward, and cried out, ‘ Take me, take me with you.’ Courage darted forward to save her, but in vain ; her cry had been too quickly heard, and in a moment the fisherman had placed her in his boat, which he instantly pushed from shore, and away it scudded merrily along the water.

For a while those on the shore stood watching their companions, some, perhaps, longing to be with them, when they listened to their merry laughter, and saw their looks of glee as the boat rose gently and sank again with the rising and sinking of the waves, while the breeze, filling the sails, carried them along. But others looked sorrowful and fearful. Innocence clasped her hands in prayer. Timid wept, partly with fear, partly with joy that he was not among them; and Courage looked perplexed and grieved—perplexed as to what steps he must take, and grieved that so many should have yielded to the temptation; and most of all, that Bellina should have been of the number.

In a moment, however, he recovered himself, and acting with his usual decision, despatched messengers to tell Pastor what had happened, for he knew the dangers of the shore, that hidden rocks were all around, and that at any moment the boat might be dashed to pieces. They were now a long way from their dwelling, and he knew that with the greatest haste it would be some time before succour could be obtained, in case of accident.

The party in the boat, meantime, appeared to have full enjoyment. They had obtained their wishes, and everything looked bright around them. Bellina alone seemed to have any fear, and for a while she sat silent, half repenting of her rashness; but her uneasiness passed away, and she, too, soon joined in the laughter and mirth which were going on. Little did they think how soon their mirth would turn to sorrow, their joy to bitter anguish.

‘To-morrow, boys, I will finish telling you my dream,’ said Mr Warble, rising to go as he spoke.

STORIES AND CATECHISINGS IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE COLLECTS;

OR A YEAR WITH THE FIRST-CLASS BOYS OF FORLEY.

Tuesday in Easter-Week.

COLLECT.

Almighty God, who through Thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

TUESDAY evening found the boys again assembled at Mr Walton's house for their lesson. Francis had had a hard day's work, his father having sent him on business to a distant town, being ill himself and unable to go; and much Francis had feared that he should not be home in time for service and the lesson. But the will being there, he made the way. The early morning found him on the road to his place of destination, and throughout the day he was careful not to lose a moment of time; he did not sit long over his meals, or stand to talk to any acquaintance he met on the road, but steadily attending to his business all the time, he was able to finish it and return to Forley just as the Church bell began to ring: then taking a hasty tea, he hurried down to Church.

'I was glad to see you at Church, and am glad to find you here, Francis,' said Miss Walton, when she

entered the room. 'I was told you were away from home to-day.'

'Yes, ma'am, father sent me to Eastend,' he replied; 'but I started early, and managed to get back in time.'

'Do you really mean that you have walked to Eastend and back to-day?' said Miss Walton. 'Why, you must have walked above twenty miles. Are you not very tired?'

'Yes, ma'am, I am tired,' he replied, 'but I wanted to hear the end of the story, and so I made haste home.'

Miss Walton smiled, and replied, 'I am glad you did, Francis;' and in a moment or two she continued: 'Your conduct to-day, Francis, may teach yourself and the other boys a good lesson. Do you see how you acted upon your wishes? If you had spent your strength only in wishing, would you have been here now?'

'No, ma'am,' he replied, 'that I should not. I started early, and wasted no time on the road, and did father's business as quickly as I could, or I shouldn't have been back in time.'

Miss W. Exactly, you carried your wishes into good effect. It is just the way in which you should act with regard to the good wishes which God puts into your hearts. You must take pains to bring them to good effect, as you took pains to-day to gratify your wishes about the story. Do you not see now how you have taught yourself a good lesson?

'Yes, ma'am, I see,' he replied; and Charley whispered, 'I should never have thought about it.'

Miss Walton, however, heard him, and replied, 'Perhaps you would not, but we often might take a lesson from our common actions, if we thought about it. We often take great pains to gratify our ordinary desires, and we should try and do the same with the good desires God puts into our hearts.'

‘Please, ma’am, we shall remember it now,’ said Alfred.

‘I hope you will,’ returned Miss Walton; ‘but it is time to stop talking and begin our lesson.—How does the Easter Collect conclude?’ she asked.

All. ‘Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.’

Miss W. Is this the usual way in which we end our prayers?

Fred. Yes, we always pray through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Miss W. And why do we do this?

George. Because there is ‘one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.’ (1 Timothy, ii. 5.)

Miss W. Can you tell me what is meant by ‘a Mediator?’

‘An Intercessor,’ replied Francis.

Miss W. Yes, but I want you to understand the exact meaning. Mediator comes from *medius*, which means middle; so mediator means a middle person, or one going between. Now, our blessed Saviour is a mediator between whom?

Several. God and men.

Miss W. Yes, He stands between God and men, and so becomes a way of approach. We pray to the Father—how?

‘Through Him,’ replied Alfred.

Miss W. Yes, and He prays to the Father—?

‘For us,’ the boys continued.

Miss W. And why cannot we approach directly to the Father?

Andrew. Because we are sinful.

Miss W. Did Adam in the Garden of Eden need a mediator?

Edward. Not in his innocence.

Miss W. But when he had sinned, was he then fit to approach God?

Francis. No, ma'am, he hid himself from the presence of God, and was driven out from Paradise.

Miss W. Then it is our sins which make us unfit to draw near to God. But why can we better approach through our blessed Saviour?

Edward. Because He is Man as well as God.

Miss W. Yes; 'For we have not an High priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' Therefore, how may we approach God?

George. 'Let us, therefore, come *boldly* unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' (Heb. iv. 15, 16.)

Miss W. Do you remember how I explained to you what was meant by the satisfaction of Christ?*

Edward. Yes, ma'am, you said Christ, by dying, had satisfied God's justice, so that He could now be merciful, and yet just.

Miss W. That is right. What we have now said will explain it more fully. God can be merciful to us—why?

Several. Because Christ suffered, the 'Just for the unjust.'

Miss W. Yes, mercy comes to us through Him, and, though God is merciful, yet He is just, because sin has been punished in—whose person?

Charley. The person of Christ.

Miss W. And now He can be 'just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' (Romans, iii. 26.) Thus Christ has gone between us and God. And though we are sinful and unfit to approach God in ourselves, yet in and through Him we have access to God; and whatever good thing we need, we have but to ask through Him, and we obtain

* See the Catechising for the Fourth Sunday in Advent.

it. Do you remember any text which promises this?

Francis. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' (St. John, xvi. 23, 24.)

Miss W. We, therefore, now offer up our prayers to the Father, through the Son. What do we say about the Son in to-day's Collect?

Several. That He liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Miss W. How do we know that He liveth?

Charley. Because we know that He rose from the dead.

Miss W. Are we quite sure that He rose?

Edward. Yes, because 'He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of the Apostles forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.' (Acts, i. 3.)

Miss W. To whom did He first show Himself?

Samuel. To Mary, as she stood at His sepulchre weeping.

Miss W. Did he show Himself to any others that day?

David. Yes, to the disciples assembled together.

'And,' said George, 'to the two disciples, as they walked to Emmaus.'

Miss W. Yes, and many other times He showed Himself after His resurrection, proving thereby that He was indeed alive. Did He rise with the same body in which He suffered?

Alfred. Yes, for He showed the disciples His hands and His feet, and bade them handle Him and see, for a spirit had not flesh and bones as He had.

Miss W. Which of the Apostles doubted?

Edgar. St. Thomas.

Miss W. And how did our Saviour prove to him the truth of His resurrection?

Andrew. He saith unto Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.' (St. John, xx. 27.)

Miss W. Was St. Thomas convinced?

'Oh yes,' said Charley, 'he could not help it. He answered and said unto Him, "My Lord and my God."'

Miss W. And was it only, do you think, for St. Thomas's sake that our Saviour thus manifested Himself, as indeed the same Jesus who had been crucified?

'Was it not for our sakes too?' asked Fred.

Miss W. No doubt it was; that we might have full proof of His wonderful resurrection, and be blessed in believing, though we see not with our bodily eyes. Who were witnesses of His resurrection?

All. The Apostles.

Miss W. Yes, having seen Him die, and seen Him so often, and so unmistakably, alive again, they are witnesses to us of His resurrection, and therefore we say in the Collect, that He—?

'Liveth,' said several.

Miss W. Yes; but although He rose with the same Body, there was a great change in Him. Did He go in and out among His disciples as He had done before?

Andrew. No, He only came sometimes.

Miss W. And when He did show Himself, how did He come?

'He came suddenly, the doors being shut,' replied Edward.

Miss W. Yes, suddenly and unperceived He came among them, and suddenly He disappeared again. When do we read of His sudden disappearance?

Francis. After breaking bread with the two disciples at Emmaus, 'He vanished out of their sight.'

Miss W. And at other times when He came among them, He was not immediately known. Look at St. John, xxi. 4.

Edgar. 'Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.'

Miss W. Did He appear in this supernatural way before His death and resurrection?

Several. No, ma'am.

Miss W. No, He then dwelt among His disciples as one like themselves, but now He only showed Himself at times, and in a sudden and wonderful manner. Did He show Himself to all the people?

George. No; 'Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God.' (Acts, x. 41.)

Miss W. We see, then, that He was changed, though the same. His Body had become spiritual. It was often invisible, and was suddenly conveyed from one place to another; yet it was the same Body, with the print of the nails in His hands and His feet, and the wound of the spear in His side; and such a change will take place in our bodies; 'sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body;' changed, yet the same. Do you remember any thing in nature at all like this? (The boys did not answer, and Miss Walton continued): Do you know what a caterpillar, or what you call a palmer, turns to?

'A butterfly,' said Alfred.

Miss W. And what state does it lie in before its change?

'It is as if it were dead,' he replied.

Miss W. Yes, it turns to what is called a chrysalis, and lies in that state some time, and then bursts into—what?

'A butterfly,' said Fred.

Miss W. Is the butterfly or the caterpillar the more beautiful?

‘Oh, the butterfly,’ cried the boys.

Miss W. Yes; now what is this like?

‘The change which the resurrection will make in our bodies,’ said Edward, reverently.

Miss W. Yes; now we are like the crawling caterpillar, and then we shall die, and be like the chrysalis, and then will come the change of the resurrection, glorious to those who shall be found in Christ;—to those who, dying with Him now, shall live with Him hereafter. Could we come to the Father through Him if He were not living?

‘No,’ said George. ‘If Christ be not risen, our faith is vain.’

Miss W. That is right. We offer up our prayers through Jesus Christ, who, though He *was* dead, now *liveth*, and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

‘It is getting late now, boys; I must ask you no more questions,’ said Miss Walton, ‘if you are to hear the end of the dream. I hear Mr Warble coming along the passage, so put away your books.’

‘I shall try and finish telling you my dream this evening,’ said the old man, as he took his seat among the boys. ‘So I must begin, without any waste of time:’—

THE OLD MAN’S DREAM OF THE ISLAND HOME.

(*Concluded.*)

SCARCELY had the messengers sent by Courage got out of sight, when the scene in the boat changed. Hitherto the fisherman had steered near the shore, and the children who remained on the beach had run along so as still to keep the boat in sight, and to hear the voices of their companions; but now he suddenly turned the helm, and steered out to sea, and then, with a laugh of scornful triumph, told the children

that they were in his power, and he should take them back to their old master. Oh ! how suddenly was their mirth changed into almost hopeless misery. A loud piercing scream from Bellina, and a rush towards the helm from the boys, followed this declaration. The children on the beach started and trembled as they heard this bitter cry, and gazed in silent agony at the boat. It was now too far distant for them to be able to hear all that was said, but they could distinguish Bellina standing, and now stretching out her arms towards them, and they could hear amidst the confusion, her voice crying in accents of despair, ' Help, oh ! help us, or we shall perish.'

But what could they do to help ? No boat was near, had they dared to disobey Pastor and attempt to go to their rescue. The deep waters were between them and their companions ; what could they do ?

Courage saw it all ; he saw that they were betrayed, he saw the boat quickly sailing away from the loved island ; he felt sure the fisherman was a servant of their great enemy, and he feared the children were completely in his power. What, then, could he do ?

' Call upon me in the time of trouble,' whispered Innocence in his ear, and instantly he sank upon his knees, and the rest of the children followed his example. They earnestly prayed their unseen, all-powerful Father in mercy to save their companions. ' Save, Lord,' they cried, ' and hear us when we call upon Thee, even for the sake of our Great Shepherd, who having been Himself tempted, is able to succour them that are tempted : through Him we come boldly unto Thee, O Father ; have mercy upon us, for in Thee is our hope.' As they did this, I saw in my dream that Bellina had noticed it, and she, too, sank on her knees, and clasping her hands together, she cried, ' Spare us, good Lord, and have mercy upon us, for we have sinned against Thee. O let not the

deep water drown us, but have mercy upon us, and that soon, for we are come to great misery.'

As these united prayers ascended, I noticed that the boat's head again suddenly turned landward, and for some time I could not tell the reason why ; but as I gazed, I saw that the man in his struggle with the boys had inadvertently dropped the helm, and the boat had instantly veered round, and was coming rapidly towards the shore, and I thought within myself, 'They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He has delivered them out of their distress.'

But now I saw that another fearful danger threatened them ; for the boat, still left unguided, was driven of the wind straight towards some dangerous rocks that here ran down into the sea. It flew rapidly through the water, rising and sinking again with the waves, but not in the easy gentle way it had done before, for the wind was now higher than it was when the children first entered the boat, and the number of rocks around made the waves uncertain and uneven, now rising with a bold swell, and then suddenly checked by a projecting rock dashing them back again. Every moment I expected to see the boat overturned, and I stood watching almost breathlessly.

And I saw in my dream that the children on the beach had now risen from their knees, and they too watched anxiously ; and every now and then I saw Courage turn and look wistfully towards the houses, hoping that help might be near at hand ; but seeing none, he seemed to try and nerve himself for action, the moment it might be necessary ; and I heard him say, earnestly, 'Oh, our Father, Thou art a strong tower of defence to all that flee unto Thee, O save them from the violence of the enemy, and give Thy servant strength to act courageously for Thy glory, and the safety of these Thy children.' He had hardly said these words when the boat rose upon a large wave that rolled swiftly shoreward, and in another instant

was dashed against a rock and split to pieces. It was a fearful moment for all. The loud shriek from the children in the boat, as it struck against the rock, rang through the air, and the group on the shore stood pale and trembling. Courage alone kept his calmness, though his straining gaze showed how anxiously and how intently he was watching. For the first instant there was so much confusion that nothing could be seen distinctly, but a moment afterwards the receding wave showed too plainly the children struggling in the water.

The rock was but a little distance from the land, nor was the water very deep, and I saw that several of the boys seemed able to swim, and were endeavouring to reach the shore.

But where was Bellina ?

In another instant Courage saw her clinging to the broken boat.

‘Pray for us, Innocence,’ he said, and dashing into the water, directed his course to the spot where he had seen Bellina. I saw at once that he was a good swimmer, but the waves were high, and the whole body of the water was agitated, and much I feared that his strength could not hold out. Innocence tremblingly obeyed him, and with clasped hands and streaming eyes she prayed for him and Bellina.

Everything else was forgotten in watching each stroke of his arms, which brought him nearer to the fainting child. At this moment another large wave came sweeping up, and all was hidden from sight. Again it has passed away, and oh ! joyful sight ! he has reached her, and with one arm round her waist is swimming shoreward.

But the wave had done its work. Wayward, unable to resist it, was carried back into the deep water, after having made considerable progress towards land, and the next instant another rolling wave dashed him helpless upon a rock, and there he lay motionless.

Slothful and the other boys were approaching the shore, but each stroke they made was feebler, and I greatly feared they would never reach it. Happily, however, help was near, and in a moment afterwards Stephen and Guido had drawn the weary boys on shore. But to return to Courage. Nearer and nearer he approached the beach, but weaker and weaker he seemed to get, and at the very moment that succour came, his grasp had loosened, and his strength was gone; and but for the timely assistance of Pastor, who had thrown himself into the water and swum towards them, Bellina must still have been lost.

But though Pastor reached Bellina, the fainting body of her brave preserver was quickly carried back into the deep water, and before any assistance could be rendered, sank from sight to rise no more alive.

Yes! good, brave, kind Courage, was thus called to his glorious home. His body was recovered, but his spirit had returned to Him who gave it. The passage to glory was rough, but it was sure; for he had been called in the very midst of the faithful performance of his duties. He had fought the good fight, he had kept the faith, and now his course was finished, and he had gone to receive the crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge will give to all His faithful children.

His body, I said, was recovered, and calm and beautiful was his countenance even in death. His dark hair, saturated with water, was pushed off his high clear forehead, and as little Innocence knelt at his head, and kissed his cold, cold cheek, I could almost have fancied that he was still alive; for I thought in my dream that I could see his own expression of determined courage still spread over his face. The same thought seemed to strike Innocence as she gazed upon him, for she murmured in low accents, 'Are you really dead, Courage? Will you awake no more? You look as you did in life.'

Yes, you look as you did when you turned so quickly, and said, "Innocence, pray for us," and then dashed so courageously into the water. But, ah! you move not! Your spirit has really gone; you will return no more. When you threw yourself into the water I heard the "angel's call," and I *knew* that you would return no more. I prayed that you might be safe. Our Father has heard my prayer, for He has taken you to Himself; there you will be ever safe—safe from every harm—safe in the bosom of our Good Shepherd.'

Thus she continued to talk to her departed friend, as though he could hear her, and now and then a quiet tear would fall upon his cold cheek, which she would wipe away again, and then stoop to kiss him, and gently stroke his clear open forehead.

And there was another who knelt near her; but his grief was different to hers. His very heart seemed bursting. 'Courage,' he said, and I *knew* that it was Timid's voice, 'how shall I do right, now that I have not you to encourage me? It was you who always helped me—your words which gave me strength—now I am left alone, how can I stand?'

'Our help standeth in the name of the Lord,' answered Pastor, who had drawn near them unperceived; 'Courage has left you, Timid; but you are not alone. Our Father has perhaps taken your help from you, that you may lean more entirely upon Him.'

In my dream, boys (said Mr Warble), I thought I turned away from this group, and heard not what more passed between them, and I bent my steps towards Guido, who stood over the dying Wayward. The fall upon the rock had stunned, though not killed him on the spot; but, as I drew near, I saw that he had not long to live; and oh! what fearful words of anguish met my ears. 'No, I have no hope,' I heard him say; 'I chose—I wilfully chose evil always. I

scorned the good, and refused to listen to reproof, and now I have no hope ; the enemy is waiting for me. Courage, oh ! Courage, why did I not listen to you—why did not I take warning from you ?

I was now close upon him, and saw that the paleness of death was spread over his countenance, and a look of unspeakable anguish met my gaze. He was injured, Guido told me, internally, and had but a few minutes to live, and then he begged the boy to try and repent, even in those few minutes—to confess his guilt, if perhaps he might find mercy. But his words were in vain.

‘I cannot repent,’ gasped Wayward, with bitter grief, ‘it is too late—yes, it is too late—oh ! for one day more ; but it cannot be, the enemy is waiting for me, I cannot escape from him. Where is my cross ?’ he asked, striving to grasp it as he spoke.

But it was gone. Carelessly he had ever kept it, and now the half-fastened clasps had loosened, and the cross was washed away. An exceeding bitter cry escaped him when he found it not ; and with that cry of agony his soul had fled.

One boy stood near him—it was Slothful. Pale and trembling he stood.

‘Will you take warning from him, Slothful ?’ said Guido. ‘Such might have been your end, thus suddenly might you have been called. Are you any better prepared ?’

Slothful did not answer ; he spoke no words of sorrow, and no tears came to his relief ; yet he trembled violently, and his face expressed great misery, while he seemed quite unable to withdraw his gaze from the lifeless form of his companion. Again Guido spoke, if perchance he might rouse him. ‘The day of reckoning will come as a thief in the night, Slothful, let it not find you sleeping ; but now, while it is called to-day, repent of your sins and be doing, lest the night come when no man can work.’

Having said this, he left him still standing by Wayward's lifeless form, and turned towards Bellina, who lay senseless in the arms of Stephen. In my dream I followed him, for I was anxious about the beautiful delicate child. Guido began immediately to rub her hands, and several of the children were doing the same to her feet, and to my surprise I saw Timid among the number. He looked more active, and there was less timidity about his manner than I had ever seen before, and I thought, 'Surely some portion of the spirit of his friend is resting upon him, giving him new courage and new energy.' But my thoughts were quickly turned from him to Bellina, who now began slowly to open her eyes, and show signs of returning life. In a few moments more she spoke. 'Courage,' she said, 'where are you?'

'He is not here,' replied Guido, kindly, fearing to tell her so soon that he had gone to his home. 'Are you better?' he asked.

But there was something in the faces of those around which spoke the truth too plainly, and told her all; and she closed her eyes again, and answered not; but tears began to flow quickly down her cheeks, and at length she raised herself out of Stephen's arms, and sinking upon her knees, she cried, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy child. Oh, Father, be merciful to me a sinner.' And when they spoke to her, and called her Bellina, she replied, 'Call me not Bellina, for I am no longer beautiful. I will go mourning all the days of my life, for there is no health in my flesh, neither is there any rest in my bones by reason of my sin. My wickednesses are gone over my head, and are like a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear.'

But Guido whispered to me, 'Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

And then I knew that the Father of all would not turn away from the sorrowful sighing of a contrite heart, nor despise the cry of a penitent child.

And the man who deceived the children, where was he?

From the moment the boat struck the rock I saw him no more. Whether he perished in the waves, or whether he found any place of safety, I know not; for as Guido's words still sounded in my ears, and I was still gazing from one child to another, and wondering whether Bellina would grow more careful, and not again let pleasure lead her wrong, and thinking that thus it surely would be; and whether Slothful would rouse himself to watchfulness and care, fearing from what I saw, that when this shock had passed away, idleness would still prevail: and, as I watched Timid, and thought that his strength had increased, that his courage would not again fail him; and as I turned from him to Innocence, and thought that she looked almost ready for glory then—so beautiful, so holy, so good was her countenance—I woke from my dream.

Was it really a dream, I thought to myself, boys; or have angels been whispering truths, solemn truths, into my ear? I roused myself and looked about me; the sun was still shining, the stream was still rippling along, the birds were still singing, and again I could hear the voices of the orphan children, as they issued from the house of prayer.

I rose and began to retrace my steps, and as I walked along, I thought, 'Is it a dream that there is such a Church on earth? Is it a dream that there are such children? children of God who have their work to do, and then are called to an everlasting home? Is it a dream that obedience, industry, thoughtful reverence, gentle kindness, are the duties of children? Is it a dream that God looks down upon them, that they are working for Him? Is it a

dream that the Blessed Spirit given to them at their Baptism, dwells in them, and guides and leads them? that the Eternal Son suffered for them, and loves them with an everlasting love? Is it a dream that the faithful and good will be taken to glory, but the evil and careless to endless misery? Is it a dream that the penitent will find mercy, the timid receive strength, the idle continue in his idleness, in spite of warning, and the good go on unto perfection? No, surely,' I thought to myself, 'this is no dream. I have been sleeping, but holy truths have been presented to my mind,' and I prayed within myself that every Christian child might grow up like Angelo, Courage, or Innocence; that the fearful might be made strong, like Timid; the erring might become penitent, like Bellina; and the good receive their reward, like loving Angelo and faithful Courage.

When old Mr Warble ceased speaking there was not a sound to be heard; it scarcely seemed as if the boys dared to breathe, so intently were they listening. For a moment Mr Warble looked round kindly upon them without speaking, and then he said, very seriously, 'You have been interested, boys, in the old man's dream, but I have not told it only to interest you. Go home and think each for yourself, if you, too, have not a work to do, and look well to yourselves how you are doing it, and may an old man's blessing go with you,' he said, rising up and leaving the room.

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